EDUCATING THE CHURCH TO EMPOWER WOMEN WHO SUFFER IN SILENCE FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE: FROM VICTIM TO VOICE RECOVERED AND RESTORED

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of the project was to develop a model to train church and community leaders to become vehicles of empowerment, recovery, and restoration for victim-survivors of domestic abuse. The problem was the church's lack of care and support for women who suffer from the effects of domestic abuse. The hypothesis was when church memberships become instruments of healing; domestic abuse survivors will be willing to seek refuge in the church. This project was tested using a mixed-method approach from observations, Bible study, a workshop and pre and posttest. The desired outcome is having the women leave this experience empowered.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people cheered me on, encouraged me, prayed with me, and helped me in ways that might have seemed small to you, but your help removed obstacles, caused me to tunnel through barriers, and reminded me that God is bigger than my circumstance. For that I will be eternally grateful.

A special thank you goes to my Professional Associates, a team hand-picked by God himself, Dr. Jana Adams, Dr. Julia Woodhouse, Dr. Karissa Horton and Dr. Willie-Barnes Jackson for your ideas, your questions and your guidance that helped me to focus on the matter at hand.

I also want to thank my wonderful children and grandchildren for inspiring me to keep going by just being who you are and keeping me laughing. And finally, thanks to my family of survivors of covert electronic harassment; my anointed pastor, Rev. Kerry D. James and the Grace United Church family and long-time friends who stood with me on this journey, always extending your support, your prayers and your love.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my Father God Almighty who sent me this way and to my grandparents, Roy and Rebecca Matthews Orr who sowed the Love of Jesus in my heart and taught me the power of prayer. And, to Annie B. Pennio Perkins (Madea), and her parents, my great-grandparents, John and Ida Pennio, inspirations sent from heaven though I never met you, to remind me that I can make it. It is also dedicated to those who keep getting back up no matter what is thrown at you, you will not sit down, shut up or quit. God is with you.

INTRODUCTION

In this age of electronic technology domestic abuse takes on a totally new appearance. There is commercialized military weapons and surveillance equipment that can be purchased over the Internet and then be used as a weapon in covert harassment.[1] Stalking can now be accomplished via the web using cell towers that allow at-a-distance, hands-free assault and battery. Invasion of social networks like Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and others allow for identity theft and harassment that have driven some victims to suicide.[2]

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chipping parties have been recorded in Miami and Mexico and a mother with a syringe can chip her daughter to be able to track her every move, so could a jealous husband or intimate partner.[3] Cell phones and car computers can receive spyware that allows either to be treated as if it's in the hands of a perpetrator. Your phone can be blocked, redirected, and recorded, all via the Internet.[4] Your car can receive commands to speed up, stall, brakes fail, door locks jam and

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[1]Marie Tessier, "Hi-Tech Stalking Devices Extend Abusers' Reach, Women's WeNews," October 2, 2006, accessed November 1, 2014, http://womensenews.org/story/061001/hi-tech-stalking-devices-extend-abusers-reach.

[2]Molly M. Ginty, "Cyberstalking Turns Web Technologies into Weapons, Womens' WeNews," May 1, 2011, accessed November 18, 2014, http://womensenews.org/story/crime-policylegislation /110501/ cyberstalking-turns-web-technologies-weapons?

[3]ABC News, "Couple Implants Microchips Into Hands: Chip Allows Access to Car, Doors and Computer," March 8, 2006, accessed November 18, 2914, http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Technology.

[4]NewsOn6.com, "Invasion of Privacy: Cell Phone Hacking," November 10, 2011, accessed October 21, 2014, http://www.newson6.com/story/16013877/invasion-of-privacy-cell-phone-hacking.

windows malfunction, from a distance as far away as across the street or across the nation. This kind of harassment can be accomplished via the same satellite service that has become so popular for delivering radio or television to you as you drive long distances.

The Department of Justice Battered Women's Project has a special advocate for victims of military abuse. Police and military abuse is treated in a category of its own due to the advanced training received for purposes of law enforcement. This population of victimized women whether wife or intimate partner, are the last to tell. Who do they tell?

What does this have to do with the church? The answer is, your choir member, mother, an usher, teen and maybe even the pastor may be involved in a marriage or have a partner that is violent. There might be covert or overt abuse in the home or in the relationship and they do not know where to turn for help. They cannot explain in terms that will not sound crazy and they will not be humiliated. Their only recourse is to keep silent.

This project seeks to develop a manual that can be used nationwide to train clergy and lay members to become agents of empowerment to those who suffer in silence from domestic maltreatment. The means by which this will be accomplished is to tackle the mountainous task of getting the church to listen to the silent screams of the victims of violence. We must acknowledge that there is a silence that still prevails in the 21st century that began in the days of the Hebrews. The truth about abuse is kept under lock and key because the super spiritual saints do not want to hear that there is a pink elephant in the sanctuary. Truth is only allowed from the Bible and not from those who have been beaten, isolated, financially deprived of support or psychologically and emotionally

battered. However, the Bible tells us that both her master's abused Hagar. She was given into sex slavery, forced to become a surrogate mother and then sent away with nothing. (Gn 16:1-16 and 21:9-14) *Text of Terror* (Jgs 19) became a bestseller because Phyllis Treble dared to challenge the church to hear what happens in a society when there is no king, no leader in authority.[5] From the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:1-11) to the woman at the well of Samaria (Jn 4:1-42), we must be willing to look past our fears of the truth, take off the mask and stop pretending that our loved one, the deacon, the musician and even the pastor may be an abuser.

In chapter one, Ministry Focus, the reader is given an introduction to my spiritual journey, Grace United Baptist Church in Nashville and Columbia, Tennessee, and the effects of domestic violence in Maury County Tennessee. The context for this project is the Columbia, Tennessee location for Grace United. This chapter allows readers to understand my spiritual formation and what inspired me to select this topic.

Chapter two, The State of the Art in This Ministry Project, will explore the various ways in which attitudes about domestic violence were shaped by early church fathers. Top research on the involvement of church leaders is examined, especially research on church activity that brings change in the life of one violated by domestic abuse. This chapter discusses at length what prominent scholars say about the selected topic. It shows my voice on the subject. New visions are shared as changes in the church service can be made to addresses the specialized needs of those who are experiencing and/or survived domestic violence.

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[5]Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984).

In chapter three, Foundations, the history of domestic violence in both the Bible and society is discussed with emphasis on healing, recovery, and restoration. This chapter reveals violence against women dating back as early as the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Biblical texts are used to support that abuse of women is not condoned by God as He allowed a whole tribe (Benjamin) to be destroyed because they violated one woman in the story of the Levite's Concubine (Jgs19). Jesus affirmed the woman at the well in Samaria letting the town know that one can recover from adverse circumstances and the ministry of restoration is part of the mission of Jesus (Jn 4). Though the Bible does not teach abuse, the early church father's allowed it, and even gave instruction on when it was appropriate.

Chapter four, Methodology, discusses how the project and fieldwork will provide meaningful research and outcomes that represent a replicable model for other congregations to follow. It shows what conclusions may be gathered as a result of the research. Included are the timeline and outcomes of the research model.

Chapter five, Field Experience, discusses the complete descriptive week-to-week account of the project in all phases. It offers participant responses, reactions, and comments to the conference call "Focus Group and Community (Domestic Violence) Awareness Day."

Finally, in chapter six, Reflections, Summaries and Conclusions, a critical reflection of the entire journey is offered to the completion of this experience. A comparison is made with previous work done on this subject. This reflection allows for review, critique, and evaluation of the function of this project as a model to train clergy and lay leaders in providing support and care to victims of domestic abuse.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Spiritual Beginnings

Millicent Yvonne Black was born and raised in Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee a small town in southern Middle Tennessee. I lived with my mother in the home of my grandparents until the age of three when my mom and dad were married. The oldest of eight children, I have three living brothers and one sister.

My maternal grandparents and paternal grandmother played the most significant role in my spiritual formation. There was a rule that everybody in the house went to church on Sunday. Saturday evening was spent starting Sunday dinner and preparing for Sunday morning, which began with Sunday school. I spent my early years in and out of my grandparents' home. My grandparents belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church in their neighborhood. My grandfather served as a deacon and was known for his soul stirring prayers and for lining the Dr. Watts hymns. My grandmother served on the Mother's Board and was responsible for helping to prepare the communion table on foot washing Sundays. My maternal grandparents belonged to a community prayer band that met in different homes each week for prayer meetings. Mama, as my grandmother was called was often asked to pray for people in the community when they were sick. She was also known to send food to the sick and to share her home with other family members who needed a place to stay. My grandparents actually raised four other grandchildren in their home until they graduated from high school.

The most significant memories of being in my grandparent's home are the many nights that I had asthma attacks as a child. Mama would sit up with me all night, as I lay propped up against the couch pillow trying to breathe and frightened of not living through the night. Mama would always ask me "Do you believe that God can heal you?" Only after I answered YES did my grandmother say, "Well, let's pray." We would repeat the Lord's Prayer together and then Mama would utter prayers of her own and rub my chest and back. The oil that Mama made from an old recipe was known to bring healing. Not only did I live through those nights of terror, but also I have lived through many nights from the age of four or so; and am now in my sixties. To God be the glory.

My paternal grandmother, Madea also played a significant role in my life. Madea belonged to the same Church as my other grandparents. Madea also served as a Mother at St. James Primitive though she did not have as many responsibilities as did Mama. Madea had a wonderfully wide smile and was an extremely warm person. She made our times together lots of fun and I looked forward to our being together. Family meals were important times to Madea and she did not hesitate to feed me. She also taught me how to cook special dishes. Madea never missed an opportunity to remind me of the value of relying on the Lord for provisions. Her spiritual example came from her commitment to the church and to serving the people in the community with a smile.

It was Madea who taught me about business. She would take me to work with her as she cleaned the Baptist Church. Madea was responsible for me getting my first car, helping my husband and I purchase our first home, and she also made strong suggestions that I should marry Dave, who became my first husband.

Today, I live on the home-place, which is an important part of Madea's family heritage. My great-grandparents, John and Ida Pinneo, purchased this property in 1898. My great-grandmother, Ida was listed in the 1920 Census as mulatto which probably meant that her mother had been abused by a white slave owner through whose union Ida was born. I was told over and over by Madea that the home-place is to always stay in the family as heir property.

More than anything, I learned the value and pleasure of unconditional love from all of my grandparents and I loved being with them. On one side of the family, I was the only living child, the only grandchild, and the only niece. On the other side of the family I was the eldest of eight children and one of many grandchildren, so I was able to experience the best of both worlds.

I lost Mama when I was thirteen. Twelve years later, in 1979, Daddy Roy passed and within a month, Madea was also gone. Losing my grandparents was a traumatic experience. I was really at a loss for the wisdom and unconditional love I received from my grandparents. All three of them were strong spiritual role models whose examples play a big part in who I am today. There was not a lot of attention paid to dealing with grief in the church during those years, so once I started counseling, I learned more about how to deal with grief during loss. However, the realization has come to me as I write this autobiography that I have never really grieved the loss of some special people in my life.

My most vivid remembrance of my adolescent years was fifth grade when the teacher made me learn and sing the song, "In Times Like These."[1] Never in my wildest

[1]Casey-Jones, Ruth, The Solid Rock (a.k.a. In Times Like These), accessed July 22, 2014, http://www.namethathymn.com/hymn-lyrics-detective-forum/index.php?a=vtopic&t=97.

dreams would I think this song would hold so much value as an adult. I had to sing this song often per my teacher's request. The song had no meaning to a nine year old girl who was shy and did not like to stand in front of a crowd; however, today it has a different significance altogether. The words to this song are important to me because they make me constantly aware that my grounding is in a Savior in whom I can cast my anchor and will stay stable and fixed in times of turmoil, confusion and trouble. The most important of the words to this song by Ruth Casey Jones, also known as Mother Jones, after being sure we know that our Rock is Jesus is, "be very sure, be very sure, your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock."[2]

During my teen and early adult years, I sang with the junior choir at church. We became the Young Adult choir together, got married, and began to raise our children in the same church, Primitive Baptist Church that my grandparents had attended their entire life.

At the age of seventeen and right out of high school, I married my high school sweetheart. We started dating when I was twelve and he was fourteen. The boy who was to become my husband saved me from having to continue to endure an abusive home life and seemed like my knight in shining armor. It took a pastor who spoke with me at a Sunday School Convention many years later to help me see that if I had just waited, I could have pursued my life as a single person and gotten married when I wanted to rather than as a means escape.

In the early years of my marriage, I pursued an Associate's Degree at Columbia State Community College in Columbia, Tennessee. At first, the decision had been made

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[2]Ibid.

to forfeit the scholarship to get away from home. The scholarship was awarded in spite of the marital status and I graduated Cum Laude two years later.

We had two daughters; the first child was born after graduating from the Community College when I was twenty-one. Our second daughter was born almost three years later. Divorce separated my husband and I after ten years of marriage. I encouraged my daughters to have a close relationship with their father in an effort to protect them from unhealthy decisions concerning men young adults.

As a single parent I threw myself into making the best life for my girls that I could. I always had intended to raise my children with their father in the home; it was not my desire to not be married to him. Nevertheless, I was determined to be the best mother that she could. I went back to college to finish my Bachelor's degree to keep child support from being a control factor that could be held over me by my children's father.

My attention was on studies and my children from 1982–1987 when I graduated from Tennessee State University. I worked full-time, went to school nights and some weekends. During this time I remained active in church while giving my children as much of my attention as possible. I had to give up Sunday evening church services the last semester in school due to papers that were due on Monday that I would write on Sunday night.

I married for the second time in 1989. This was a match that should have never been. Every time I would cancel the wedding plans, someone who I considered to be more spiritual than me would advise me or give me a word from the Lord. Seven years after it began, the marriage ended. Though the pastors knew of the problems in the marriage, I was told that I could not stay at the church if I got a divorce. The lack of

trained counsel and loss of the marriage led me to wish for an opportunity to help others going through this kind of turmoil.

Traumatic times in my life were experienced when old men in the neighborhood and even a pastor was found to be unsafe for a little girl to be near without an adult overseer or another child around. There were times when we girls would help each other get away from the straying hands of older perverts. It was during these days that I became determined to protect my own children and others from such evil men. Those childhood experiences were extremely disturbing and I still wear the scars of them even after specialized intervention. I spent many years as an adult trying to get over the results of these sick men's actions and believe that healing, recovery, and restoration is possible for anyone.

Today, I am faced with being stalked by a man who has been trained by the military in cyber/airborne warfare.[3] Through the air, as described in an article entitled, "The Shocking Menace of Satellite Surveillance," a person can use this now commercialized technology to mimic the actual act of sexually assault, rape, molestation, and many other acts of abuse without being in the same room with the victim.[4] These almost invisible assaults, exacerbates my feelings of helplessness and fills me with anxiety as I tried to get away from a man touching me in ways and places I would not allow. This technology can cause one to be burned severely inside and out, scratched, blistered, hit in the eye, socked in the stomach, made to fall down and numerous things

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[3]Paul Baird, *Hearing Voices, Mind Reading, Secret Weapons, Media Crimes Information & Articles*, accessed March 3, 2014, http://www.gang-stalking.be/CD%20gang-stalking-Benjamin-Simon/ressources%20biblio/hearing-voices-mind-reading-secret-weapons.pdf.

[4]Fleming, Fleming: *The Shocking Menace of Satellite Surveillance*, accessed July 22, 2014, http://english.pravda.ru/main/2001/07/14/10131.html.

can be done to the brain, all considered to be domestic violence by the law, yet in a small town in rural Middle Tennessee there is an attempt to sweep this negative behavior under the rug.

The desire for a better opportunity to grow spiritually caused me to unite with Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in Columbia. Friends came quickly as I became a part of the Sunday school then added to the teaching staff. I was active in the choir, was Church librarian, the assistant church clerk, and member of the Missionary Society, was active in the Youth Movement of the Duck River Association, and grew by leaps and bounds in my faith. There were revivals, institutes and trainings that presented opportunities to learn more about being a Christian and growing in grace.

It was at Mt. Calvary that I had my first experience in organizing a Sunday school retreat, going to the Tennessee Baptist Missionary and Education Congress where classes were taught and great preaching could be heard at least twice a day; morning and night. I organized a trip for the Sunday school children to attend a National Baptist Sunday School Convention in Birmingham, Alabama. The retreat became a joint effort with several other Missionary Baptist churches in our Association and became an annual event for about three years until I left Mt. Calvary.

Passion for Ministry

Contributing most to my spiritual growth as I matured in age were those weekend retreats, workshops, and Leadership Trainings that were hosted by a Baptist church in

Nashville that I later joined and Aglow International (Aglow) an interdenominational organization of Christian women with more than 3,500 fellowships in more than 140 nations. During these times of being spiritually fed and challenged to grow, I developed a love for the intimacy that I found with my Father God that I had never experienced before. Whether it was the Emmaus Walk at a church retreat or the Prayer Room at an Aglow retreat, time with Him became most precious. It was during these quiet times that I learned the simple prayer, "Day by day by day, Dear Lord, three things I pray; to see you more clearly; to follow you more nearly; to love you more dearly, day by day."[5]

Involvement in Aglow as a member and as a local and Area Board officer also provided times to develop leadership skills, understand how to become a spiritual support to women in the Chapter's and in the community and learn to depend on the guidance of the Holy Spirit more significantly through prayer and Bible study. In July 1989, I attended a Women's Aglow Spiritual Enrichment Training and received the following Word from the pastor of the Church where the SET was being held:

> Pastor Barry:
> Lord, I just ask you right now to release within her the Word of Knowledge, Lord the Word of Wisdom in Jesus Name. Lord just release that gift and calling of God-Lord that she'd flow in a Word of Wisdom and a Word of Knowledge.
>
> Prophecy:
> For I have called you to stand tall and stand strong says the Lord, and yea you will be a pillow says the Lord that others will be leaning upon. At times you've said Lord I need to lean on someone else; I need to draw from the strength of others. But the time is coming says the Lord, for others will lean upon you and draw from your strength says the Lord.
>
> And yea the Word of Knowledge and the Word of Wisdom shall flow even as you speak unto others. You, you won't be thinking well I'm giving a Word of Knowledge or a Word of Wisdom, but you'll be sharing, and just sharing in a casual way, and a Word of Wisdom and a Word of Knowledge will come forth

[5] Fredric, Nietzsche, *Day by Day,* 2012 Lent Study of Wayzata Community Church, accessed 5-16-2015, www.wayzatacommunitychurch.org, 3.

that will minister to the heart of that one. As they listen, they'll receive what that Word of Knowledge and that Word of Wisdom has for them. And they'll receive that anointing says the Lord, of the Spirit of God, to direct and change the course of their life, says the Lord. For there are those that would stand against the walls that the enemy has put up and say how can I get out of this. And yea as you give them that Word of Knowledge, that Word of Wisdom that my Spirit would give you says the Lord, it will enable them to find the door in which to go through and not have to stand and face that wall throughout their life says the Lord.

For I have called you to be a liberator says the Lord; a liberator of those in bondage. For there are those that I am going to bring you in contact with that are bound with religious spirits and religious ideologies. Even you have been bound in days gone by says the Lord, but you are going to find the liberation of God coming in you says the Lord, so that you might impart it unto others. For I have looked and I have beheld my people that are hurting because of religious spirits; because of religious ideologies and not because of the things of the Spirit says the Lord. Yea and I look and I behold them and I say who can I send, who can I bring them in contact with. And I look down and I say you're the one, you're the one says the Lord. So be ready when they come your way. You are going to hear things that sound good and religious and sound even spiritual, but the insight of the Lord will show you that it's a religious spirit, and a religious teaching and it's not the thing of the Spirit. And you will be able to come back and point out, no the Word of God says this, the way of the Lord says this is the way. You don't earn your way in the presence of God, you don't keep your right standing with God by working, working, working, your obedience is what He requires. Obedience to what He's saying not what men would think or what men would say, and truly says the Lord the Words of Knowledge and Words of Wisdom shall flow. Yea, not only for then, but for thee, says the Lord. For I am healing hurts, I'm restoring says the Lord, and then you're going to find me stirring you says the Lord. I'm going to stir you, stir you, stir you, even as an eagle would stir the nest. And I'm going to kick you out of the nest, says the Lord and you're going to think O Lord, I'm about to go under, I'm going to hit the ground. And just before you get to the ground, says the Lord, I'm going to be there to lift you back up because I want you to trust me says the Lord; I want you to learn that I'll never leave you, I'll never forsake you. I want you to learn when you're out on the water as Peter that I'm still there, I'm still there, I'm still there, I'm still there.

And so it is says the Lord as you step out, I'll be there says the Lord, even though at times it'll seem as though I'm miles away, I'll be there for I'm watching you says the Lord, and I'll grab you at the last moment and I'll lift you up. And then the time will come says the Lord whey you'll soar, you'll soar, you'll soar says the Lord, you'll soar, you'll soar, you'll soar says the Lord. And yea you'll know that I'm there, whether you feel my presence, whether you sense my presence or not, you'll know that I'm there and that I have sent you, says the Lord.

Pastor Barry:

> So just know when He starts stirring and it seems like He's gone and you're going under, He's going to be there. He's watching, O Bless the Lord.

I have met some real prayer warriors on my journey. All of these people have played a significant part in helping me develop into a vessel that God can use. Of course, I had to do a lot of yielding and binding of my will to the will of the Father. I have not yet arrived, nor do I believe that God has thrown me off the Potter's wheel.

Surviving some of life's experiences has made me sensitive to the needs of others, especially those who are suffering. God has been faithfulness to see me through the hard times of loss of significantly influential people in my life, including two divorces. Having come through these experiences by God's grace has made me a stronger advocate for those who are hurting. To help me recover from the stresses of life's losses, I sought professional counseling. Knowing that my past could have an impact on the lives of those that God had entrusted in my care, I worked to be a positive role model for all with whom I came in contact. I started a Prayer Hour on the local radio station that led to me earning a Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy.

In the 21st century, my passion for ministry is fulfilled in the activities that take place outside the walls of the church building. My interest in Congregational Development in New Faith Communities grew out of my desire to minister to the church in the community. Many people may never enter the doors of a sanctuary except for a funeral and that is not the time nor does it provide enough time to address the hidden needs of a person. Ministry must be designed to meet the needs of the individual as demonstrated by Christ in the Gospels. The writer believes in the importance of fulfilling

the mandate of the Great Commission, which is to reach, teach, and keep the flock of the Living God.

Context For Ministry Focus

The Church

Grace United Church is known as one church with two locations, 1221 Brick Church Pike, Nashville and 416 East Eighth Street, Columbia, Tennessee. Its Mission Statement reads, "Our mission is to become an awesome spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit and to promote Christ in our church, community and in our world."

Grace United Baptist Church was founded and organized in Nashville, Tennessee on February 14, 2000, by Kerry D. James, Sr., a man who really loves God. In March 2010, God gave Pastor Kerry James another vision that led him back to his hometown of Columbia, Tennessee to organize an 8:30 A.M. worship service. He was also to continue holding services in Nashville. A few members would travel with him every Sunday and participated in the Columbia service. The Church began to see increase within the first few months. Within two years at the second location as many as 200 people coming from many different religious backgrounds and faiths worshipped at Grace United.

Pastor James, an accomplished gospel singer and playwright/songwriter has received numerous awards for the many different programs and outreach ministries that he and the church has been involved in over the years. He has written and produced a play surrounding the devastation of domestic violence entitled, "Where Did I Go Wrong"?

Church services, Bible study, Sunday school, and worship services are held weekly at both locations. Between the two locations, the membership at Grace United

including other regular attendees total 275-300. The majority of those coming to the worship services affirm their commitment by giving their time, talents, and money to support the ministry of the church. Grace United is a church of love and of the Spirit of God.

The church is made up of many different ministries that cater to the spiritual and physical needs of the church and the entire communities. These ministries include the following: Congregational Care Team, Pastoral Care, Mission and Outreach Team, Music and Fine Arts, Christian Education, Youth Department, Inter-City Outreach Ministry and Church Operations Team. Officers include: Pastor, Associate Ministers, Trustees, Mothers, and Deacons. The Missionary organization is under construction.

Ministries of the Church

Grace United Missionary Baptist Church offers Sunday school, Wednesday Night Bible study at the Nashville Location and Choir Rehearsal. Thursday night is Bible Study at the Columbia location. Vacation Bible Study (VBS) is offered annually.
Grace Women's Ministries are also held at both locations as well as New Member Classes. It is the ladies of these Women's Ministries and in the community that will become my focus group for the project. The ministries of the church offer involvement on a personal level and a chance to overcome the isolation that may be present in an abusive relationship or home life. Of those attending Grace United, it is estimated that 25% are currently in situations of domestic violence and at least 75% have been in domestic abuse relationships, witnessed domestic violence as a child or youth.

The Women's Ministry has fifteen or more weekly attendees. The focus of the ministry is liberation from bondages of any kind. The current literature being studied is

Breaking Free: The Journey, The Stories by Beth Moore, which offers freedom through the transforming power of Jesus Christ.[6]

The pastor supports hurting women through sermons and song. He offers an invitation to freedom from the pulpit by accepting each person no matter where you are in life. The pastor's sensitivity to the issue of domestic violence is a plus for this congregation, which is a good mixture of all ages and both gender. There is the opportunity to work with the community to bring an awareness of what the church can do to support a victim of domestic violence because the pastor is a native Columbian and because he is known to work to better the lives of those he touch. The outreach activities of the church are important strengths for the congregation, who through their activity is able to go into the homes of the community residents to offer service. Consequently, residents would be more apt to respond to our offer for domestic violence intervention because of the love shown by the membership.

A weakness for the church at this time is that the Sunday attendance has outgrown its current location. This weakness becomes strength in that it also provides an opportunity for further growth. The size of the current meeting rooms would make it difficult to house a large number of participants for the women; however, the opportunity is to meet in a public meeting room, which is in a more central location.

In conclusion, the State of Tennessee and the City of Columbia have been identified as needing improvement in the manner in which they offer protection and other intervention to victims of domestic abuse. There is one domestic violence center in Columbia, which is usually left to meet the needs of women, and children who are

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[6]Beth Moore, *Breaking Free: The Journey, The Stories* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway Christian Resources, 2009).

victimized by this crime. Churches assist the Center with financial and other support. An opportunity for Grace United is to show the community that the church still has a responsibility to its members and to the community to lead in the restoration of a child of God. My interest and desire is to be the representative that God is seeking in these days of His love, mercy, and acceptance of battered women. With this vehicle, I believe that women will become empowered to receive healing, recover from losses, the effects of abuse, and recover to become an instrument of empowerment themselves.

All Things Work Together

Grace United Baptist Church, one church in two locations, is situated in the state known for high homicide rates in violence against women and in the city that has the most cases of domestic violence. Reports on both a national and state level confirm that statistics of violence against women are way out of proportion when compared with other states in America. Also, when compared to a major city in Tennessee with a population almost nineteen times larger than that of Columbia, the reports are startling to the average person and horrifying to the victims.

Letters to the editor of the local newspaper reveal that victims and legal representatives alike recognize the existence of unfair treatment towards women who file charges of domestic abuse. Additionally, one victim wrote of the presence of the old-boys network at play within the court system, the police department, and the prosecutor's office. Comments from the director of the local domestic violence center places the blame on all three public services while asking for a plan to decrease and eliminate the reasons for such high numbers of violence in a small town. The editor of the local newspaper challenged these same public servants to present a united front against

domestic violence by admitting they need help and working together to send the message to abusers that violence is not acceptable behavior and will not be accepted. The one thing left out of everyone's plans is to turn to the religious community for assistance.

Empirical evidence of the problem and hypothesis as described in this project are proven to be the case not just for Grace United Baptist Church but also for other churches in Columbia and throughout Maury County, Tennessee. Women suffer in silence from domestic abuse because there are very few places they can go to find relief. I do not know of a church in this area that offers opportunities for healing, recovery, or restoration through the specific ministries of the church. When church leaders and lay members are open to meet the challenge of becoming a vehicle of healing, women suffering from domestic abuse will be more willing to seek refuge in the church, which is the hospital of God.

Grace United Baptist Church's strength is grounded in a pastor who is sensitive to women in all seasons of life. The pastor is also concerned for the safety of not just his members but women in the community. A second strength of Grace United is a strong Women's Ministry. An associate minister meets with the ladies each Saturday morning. The minister is sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, strong in prayer and Bible knowledge. The women are committed to spiritual and emotional growth, and are active in other ministries of the church. A third strength of Grace United is the fact that the men follow the leadership of the pastor in their care and respect for women. All members are responsive to the messages and series presented by the pastor that emphasizes how Christians should respond to acts of violence according to the Word of God. The synergy

between the congregation and the pastor where domestic violence is concerned is that the pastor has been exposed to domestic violence on a personal level.

The need of the church is to be able to offer a ministry dedicated to the care, support, and empowerment of women who suffer from the effects of domestic abuse. It is also essential that Grace United becomes a model for other churches in the community and in the county. Many times, churches are satisfied to send money, items and sometimes volunteers to the local domestic violence center in support of victim/survivors of the many faces of domestic violence, i.e., intimate partner violence, battering, domestic violence, domestic abuse, intimate partner terrorism, sexual abuse, spousal abuse and stalking. We must keep in mind that physical and sexual abuses are not the only forms of abuse; psychological, emotional, financial, verbal, and isolation are also considered forms of abuse. My contention is when church memberships become instruments of healing; domestic abuse survivors will be more willing to seek refuge in the church.

My strengths for serving in Grace United Baptist Church are those acquired from both formal education and experience from spiritual and community involvements. My greatest strength to be shared in this church and in the community is the value of my personal experience with abuse as a child and as an adult. The abuse was not the end of the matter, healing and forgiveness was. The second strength is an educational degree in a behavioral science, which gives me insight into the impact of physical, psychological, and emotional abuse. Thirdly, I have been involved in social justice issues through membership in a statewide organization that included lobbying for change at the state

legislature. Most important are the gifting's and gracing given by God through the Holy Spirit such as teaching, shepherd/pastor, mercy and administrator.

As I look at the gifts and callings of God (Rom 11:29) on my life, it is clear that God chose them because he looked ahead and saw the means by which Satan would try to devour me. Looking back, even today, I see God really does know the plans He has for me (Jer 29:11). The Greek word for administration is kubernesis, which means one who steers a ship.[7] With this gift, I am able to organize, develop, and implement a project. I able to administer, promote, and lead the various affairs of the church and works well with the human resources available for the task. The gift of mercy gives me the ability to grace to deal with people who have needs that most people do not feel they have the skills to work with. This gift and my personal background as a victim/survivor of domestic abuse help me to identify with the many losses and insecurities of those victimized by this crime. I am able to encourage them through the empowerment stage because I was in their shoes and in many ways, still am. As a shepherd/pastor or even teacher, my desire to help people find the love and care of the Lord in their lives and their life's situations is overwhelming. I love to show people in the Word of God how much He loves us and that He knows how to care for us, even in the most hurtful and dangerous places.

I have spent years in leadership positions within the church and Christian organizations. Positions held have been that of Sunday school and Bible teacher, president of a local chapter of an International Women's Ministry, vice-president of Outreach for this same Women's Ministry, organizer of youth tutorial, volunteered with

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[7]Ephesian Four Ministries, *Spiritual Gift Analysis*, Church Growth Institute, (Elkton, MD), accessed Januay15, 2014. http://store.churchgrowth.org/epages/ChurchGrowth.sf.

college-bound youth as a college search instructor, multi-year co-organizer of College Expo presented by several local churches, founder and president of a Christian Ministry called Hope for the Hurting as well as a local Christian Women outreach group called Fellowship of Christian Women. I have organized retreats, conferences, workshops, health fairs, and trips to National church conferences. I have also served on several committees through the Statewide Organization for Community Empowerment, a grassroots organization established to empower communities to take part in the protection, defense, and improvement of the quality of their lives.

The Black Church and the Family in the South

The Black church in the United States and the South was formed out of the deep social void that was caused by slave families being broken up due to slave trade.[8] From the immediate family, a spouse or a child could be sold and moved away. Rather than being used to describe a particular institution, the term Black church portrays the countless collection of Christian denominations that make up the African American's desire to create their own worship experience.[9] The formation of these churches grew into a joint effort of freed Blacks and slaves who lived in both the North and South. Facing immense danger, resistance, and discrimination, today, the Black church remains a strong and respected institution in the South and in the North.

The first Africans brought to Jamestown, Virginia in 1619 were indentured servants. African slaves were considered to be heathens and not spiritual beings by their

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[8]Norma Jean Lutz, "*The First African-American Institution'*," *The History of the Black Church*, African-American Achievers. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 2001, accessed December 7, 2013, *African-American History Online*. Facts On File, Inc. http://www.fofweb.com/activelink2.asp?ItemID=WE01&iPin=AABC01&SingleRecord=True.

[9]Ibid.

masters because of a rumor that if Africans were considered to have souls and became Christians, they would have to be freed.[10] So, keeping Africans from becoming Christians was an economical decision for the early slave masters. The bishops of the Church of England insisted, "The freeing of the soul in Christ did not alter the body in any way," and in 1667 the Virginia Assembly implemented a resolution to allow Africans access to Christianity.[11] Slavery became law in 1661 and the Virginia Commonwealth declared in 1667 that slaves had souls; still the Anglicans twisted Christianity to be a means to save the souls of the heathens.[12] In spite of these decisions, there were no real attempts by Anglican slave masters to convert the slaves to Christianity until the 1700's. Henry H. Mitchell, the author of *Black Church Beginnings*, refers to the years between 1619 -1750 as *the Silent Years* due to the inability of the Africans to access the white man's gospel.[13] This did not mean that there was no worship services in the Black community for their love and fervor for God could be heard in their songs.

African American congregations grew fastest in the South after 1750.[14] There were many legal restrictions and other resistance to the growth of this African American institution, but the numbers of Blacks were greater and the congregations increased. There is controversy between the historians of the name of the first Black Baptist church in the South. What is known is that from the formation of Baptist churches in the Black

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[10]Henry H. Mitchell, *Black Church Beginnings The Long-Hidden Realities of the First Years* (Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.), 23.

[11]Ibid., 24.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid., 26.

[14]Ibid., 92.

community, several conventions were formed: National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., National Baptist Convention of America, and the Progressive National Baptist Convention.

Domestic Violence in the South

Domestic violence in the African American community is said to have grown out of the frustration of the black male to provide for his family after the slaves were freed. It has been said that the release of the slaves after the Civil War, the Black man did not have a role model of how a man should treat his wife. During slavery, the Black man had no rights even to his own wife and children.[15] In freedom, the Black man's frustration at becoming provider and protector added stress to the family, which usually erupted into violence against the wife?

The laws of Tennessee were instituted to protect domestic slaves from being brutalized and dehumanized by their masters. Tennessee law required slave-owners to feed, clothe, house and provide medical attention to their slaves. In April 2009 Reverend David O. Jones reported on several Tennessee Supreme Court decisions that upheld convictions of men who violated those laws.[16] Despite the laws to protect the slaves from domestic abuse, this state is not as astute at implementing laws that does the same for women who are victimized by an abuser. Not even murder in domestic abuse by an intimate partner or husband is always prosecuted in today's society. These decisions are recorded as:

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[15]Annie H. Pinn, and Anthony B. Pinn, *Fortress Introduction to Black Church History* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press), 1.

[16]David O. Jones, *Slavery in Tennessee*, Tennessee House State & Local Government Committee, April 2009, accessed January 17, 2013, http://www.freetennessee.org/custpage.cfm /frm/56745/ sec _ id/ 56745.

9 Tenn. 156-William Fields v. State of Tennessee, Nashville, January 1829
Regarding the killing of a slave

29 Tenn. 268-Lunsford and David v. Baynham, Nashville, December 1849
Regarding the physical neglect of a slave

37 Tenn. 455-J. M. Kirkwood et al v George Miller. Jackson, April 1858
Regarding the humanity of a slave[17]

Research on domestic violence shows the far reaching effects it has on the emotional and psychological health of the victim and the witnesses whether children or other adults. Though domestic violence is a crime against an individual, it has been found to affect the community on a local and state level including economic effects, which are also reported.[18] Quick Facts from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation released in its 2012 Annual Report on Domestic Violence showed that the abuser was most likely known by the abused with simple assault making up 69.2% of all domestic violence crimes. Of the domestic victims who reported abuse in Tennessee, 99% were either White (58.3%) or African-American (40.7%). Though Boyfriend/Girlfriend abuse was most frequently reported, spouses were more than six times more likely to be abused than ex-spouses in domestic abuse case.[19]

Maury County Tennessee

Maury County, also referred to as The Dimple of the Universe, is located in the bluegrass section of Middle Tennessee.[20] This county was formed from its immediate

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[17]Ibid.

[18]*Domestic Violence 2010-2012 Statistics*, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's CJIS Support Center, 1.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Lois Harlan Orr, & Gilbert McWilliams Orr, 3.

neighbor to the north, Williamson County on November 24, 1807. The residents of Maury County are considered to be the greatest assets. Demographic information for Columbia and Maury County from the U. S. Census Bureau are as follows: Estimated population as 2011, 34,915—81,509. The Bureau reports the percentage of White to Black persons: 72.1%—20.8% in Columbia to 84.6%—12.6% in the County. American Indian and Alaska Native population is 0.3%/0.4% and Asian persons are 0.8%—0.7% respectively. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin in Columbia are 7.0% and 5.0% in the Maury County.[21] The Median age of the residents in Maury County is 36.3 years; in Tennessee it is 35.9 years. The males/female ratio in Maury County is 48.6%—51.4%. Average family size is 2.6 in Maury County and 2.0 in Tennessee. Average income is $42,806—$41,725 respectively.[22]

Two books that hold significance in the history of Maury County were published after the Race Riot of 1946 in Columbia, Tennessee; *No More Social Lynching's* by Robert W. Ikard,[23] and *The Color of the Law: Race, Violence and Justice in the Post-World War II South* by Gail W. O'Brien.[24] These books detail the events surrounding the violent outbreak in the Black community that involved some well-known persons such as Civil Rights attorney Thurgood Marshall, Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the

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[21]*Columbia and Maury County QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau*, accessed December 28, 2012, http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/4747119.html.

[22]*City-Data*, accessed December 28 2012, http:www.city-data.com/county/Maury_County-TN.html.

[23]Robert W. Ikard, *No More Social Lynchings* (Franklin, TN: Hillsboro Press, 1997).

[24]Gail Williams O'Brien, *The Color of Law* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

Communist Party, and the U. S. Department of Justice. *No More Social Lynchings* is called the battle cry of the Black community.[25]

The City in Context

Statistics released in March 2013 report that Columbia, Tennessee was reported to have the most cases of domestic violence per person than any other city in the state. The state of Tennessee is said to be the third most likely place in the country where a man could kill a woman says this news report.[26] The numbers of female domestic abuse victims are just as disturbing when seen in a report released by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation. According to their report, not only are women more likely to be killed by men but women were also three times more frequent reporters of the crime to be a victim than were men.[27]

This data is significant when we look at possible reasons white women feel freer to report than Black women; this could be due to the religious beliefs of the Black female and the Black family code of silence. The code of silence is an unspoken rule that no one talks about what happens in the family outside of the walls of the home. It is not just the Black community that has experienced the code of silence; most recently, women and men both enlisted and discharged or wrongfully discharged from the military have been reporting sexual abuse by the thousands. Female clergy and minister's wives are also known to honor a code of silence deciding to not tell on their abusive spouse rather than

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[25]Ibid., ix.

[26]Dennis Ferrier, *Columbia Has Highest Rate of Domestic Violence in State*, WSMV-TV, Posted Feb. 20, 2013, Updated Mar. 6, 2013.

[27]Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's CJIS Support Center, *Domestic Violence 2010-2012 Statistics*, 2.

jeopardize his position in the church. Each of these victim populations needs the care and support of the church. To exacerbate this abuse, policemen, and military both enlisted and veterans are known to honor a code of silence in which they cover for the criminal activity of each other. Thus, when police officers are also veterans, there is a higher incidence of fraternization and the crime goes uninvestigated and unprosecuted.

When addressing the issue of domestic violence and the city's rating as number one in the state before the City Council of Columbia, Tennessee, the attorney and Director of the Hope House, referred to the recent report by blaming the criminal justice system in Columbia and the surrounding area. She named police officers, the district attorney's office, and ultimately the courts as being in the circle of blame—one that encompasses all those whose task it is to fight crime in the city."[28] The statistics from the 2011 calendar year came from per capita measures that showed Columbia's rate of 3,282 domestic violence victims per 100,000. Memphis reported 3,168 victims per capita though their population is more than 652,000 when compared with Columbia's population of less than 35,000.[29]

Synergy

The synergy with Grace United Baptist Church is evident as I have been placed in a congregation where at least twenty-five percent of the women have been in abusive situations and/or relationships and up to seventy-five percent of the congregation have witnessed domestic violence in the home or the community. At present, the pastor is

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[28]Bohy Ric, "Domestic Violence In Columbia: Victim Advocate Analyses Issue," *Columbia Daily Herald,* February 19, 2013, accessed June 21, 2013, http://brentwoodlife.columbiadailyherald.com/sections /news/local-news/domestic-violence.

[29]Tim Hodge, "City Tops State in Domestic Abuse," *Columbia Daily Herald*, February 19, 2013, accessed June 21, 2013, http://brentwoodlife.columbiadaileyherald.com/sections/news/local-news/city-tops-state-do.

working to establish a non-profit organization that will address the needs of victims of domestic violence. I was plagued throughout my childhood by predators and was afraid to tell my parents because of the propensity to be blamed for the actions that had been done to her. Consequently, I remained silent until I was able to seek counseling as an adult at which time I was able to work through the pain and shame of the actions of the perpetrators. I was also abused by my custodial parent and pretty much ignored by my absent parent. I am actively seeking resolution to a stalking issue in my life. My present affiliation with a church where the pastor is sensitive to the plight of women who are or have been victimized by domestic violence abuse is more evidence of the hand of God on my life.

The proposed method of proving or disproving that women will turn to the church more readily as a safe place to break the silence of domestic abuse is by offering an opportunity for women to become empowered to speak by participating in a Bible study. A community activity will be organized as a method of educating the community and the congregations of the resources available to help an abused woman find safety and then break the silence of her victimization. This activity will include other churches, domestic violence service delivery agencies, legal services, and law enforcement. Finally, a conference/retreat will be planned to involve the survivors and all who wish to celebrate these women's efforts to overcome their oppression. The involvement of the congregation of Grace United Baptist Church will be encouraged as a vehicle of training them to recognize and know how to respond to women seeking a way out of an abusive relationship or situation.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY MODEL

Theoretical Foundation

Recent reports from the United Nations and the World Health Organization find that intimate partner violence crosses class, culture, ethnic and national boundaries. In the United States alone, approximately 5.3 million women eighteen years and older have experienced intimate partner violence.[1] The results show up in the form of physical and financial cost, which is devastating around the world as individuals, families, churches and communities are affected.

Domestic violence today has many names, i.e., intimate partner violence, battering, domestic abuse, intimate partner terrorism, partner abuse and gender violence. This violence can take the form of physical abuse, psychological/emotional/ verbal abuse, economic abuse, or stalking. Many women are faced with keeping silent about the abuse they are forced to endure with a husband, intimate partner or sometimes, a live in partner. Domestic abuse is especially hidden from the church due to many reasons.

This project will look at what authors and researchers have found to be true or untrue about the topic of domestic violence, and the role the church should play in the healing, recovery, and restoration of the victim. It is recognized that the batterer must also have some intervention and be held accountable, but this paper will focus on the

[1]Catherine Clark Kroeger, & Nancy Nason-Clark, *No Place for Abuse Biblical & Practical Resources to Counteract Domestic Violence, Revised Edition* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 45.

woman as the victim. The purpose of the project is to develop a model to train church and community leaders to become vehicles of empowerment, recovery, and restoration for victim-survivors of domestic abuse. The problem is the lack of care and support from the church for women who suffer from the effects of domestic abuse. The hypothesis is when church memberships become instruments of healing; domestic abuse survivors will be willing to seek refuge in the church.

Literature Review

Secular and religious scholars have written much literature on the topic of domestic abuse and violence. Both literature and research have been written to defend the abuser and the abused. Some use scripture to validate the abuse of women by men and others interpret the Bible according to the healing and restorative actions of God towards the victim. Because of the well-regarded ideas surrounding patriarchy and male privilege, abuse by many pastors is interpreted, regarded, and accepted, as normal and expected.[2]

In the book *Mending the Soul*, Steven R. Tracy reports on the power of abuse to damage the soul of the victim.[3] He reports that emotional, physical, and relational damage is most often found in victims of abuse and it is imperative that churches no longer ignore or cover it up. In three sections of this book, Tracy helps the reader to see the nature of abuse by writing on the origin of sin and the role freewill plays in abuse. Tracy also expounds on the effects of abuse, showing the influence or control of shame, powerlessness, and isolation on a victim. In writing on healing and recovery, Tracy says

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[2]James N. Poling, "Hearing the Silenced Voices: The Work of Justice in Pastoral Theology," *Journal of Pastoral Theology*, accessed August 21, 2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

[3]Steven R. Tracy, *Mending the Soul Bringing Hope to Generations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 12.

that the path that leads to healing includes facing the abuse and the effects of it, rebuilding intimacy with God and forgiving the wrongdoer. Tracy discusses the role of forgiveness in detail to not leave the victim feeling as the victim he described early in the book. Here, the woman as a child was told that she was sinful and unchristian, to be angry with God and the perpetrator and obligated to forgive and forget what had been done to her.[4]

In discussing the power of freewill, Tracy quotes and makes reference to scriptures that speak of man's propensity to sin. He agrees with many other scholars who record that in Orthodox Christianity, humans are born scandalously wicked. To show the progression of humanity's depravity, Tracy lists the places in Genesis Chapters 3-4, beginning with Adam and Eve in the Garden, sin shows up in Genesis 3:1-6; in 3:12-13 blame takes place, by Genesis 4:8, murder has been committed and Genesis 6:5-8, God destroys the whole world because of the spread of the cancer of evil.[5]

The creation story was discussed in *Theological Reflections on Violence and Abuse* in which the judgmental attitudes of several first century theologians were shared. Rather than looking at Adam as the leader who sinned, Eve is seen as the prototype of women by Augustine, who decided that therefore, women were dangerous to men. Augustine writes in *The Literal Meaning of Genesis,* that because of sin, "…and it is not by her nature but rather by her sin that woman deserved to have her husband for a master... If this order is not maintained, he warned, "nature will be corrupt still more, and

[4]Ibid.,12.

[5]Ibid.,16.

sin will be increased."[6] This statement is amusing considering that many men, even those who are professing Christian leaders, are adulterers, pedophiles, rapists, stalkers, abusers, and womanizers. Yet, Augustine puts the full weight of sin on the woman without placing any burden on the man whose job it is to guide her.

Biblical interpreters have used Genesis as a primary source of theological reflection on women for many centuries. In addition to St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century used the creation story as a basis for discussing men and women's natures and roles. His rational thought processes considered that women were inferior to men. This inferiority made them by nature, further from God than men and only their ability to reproduce made them of value.[7] Aquinas' writings about women had a significant impact on theological thought.

Traci West, in *Wounds of the Spirit*, speaks to the problem of patriarchy and male privilege and the part it plays in the systemic problem of intimate partner violence.[8] Patriarchy, a systematic depreciation of the worth and value of women, is also a means whereby the anatomical differences of a woman makes her automatically under the authority of a man. In speaking about the history of patriarchy, West includes the violence experienced by slave women at the hands of the white master. She goes on to say that the attitude of the Black man towards the Black woman was in many ways

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[6]Nancy E. Nienhuis, "Theological Reflections on Violence and Abuse," *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling*, 59, no. 1-2: 109-123, accessed October 16, 2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

[7]John Hammond, S. J. Taylor, *St. Augustine: The Literal Meaning of Genesis,* vol. 2, Books 7-12, *Ancient Christian Writers The Works of the Fathers in Translation,* Edited by Johannes Quasten, Walter J. Burghardt and Thomas Comerford Lawler, No. 42 (New York, NY: Newman Press 1982), 171.

[7]Nienhuis, "Theological Reflections on Violence and Abuse," 116.

[8]Traci C West, *Wounds of the Spirit: Black Women, Violence, and Resistance Ethics* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1999), 5.

inherited from the idea of white male hierarchy.[9] Because of her strength, the victimization of the Black woman is often overlooked and reduced in importance due to her ability to survive.[10]

West offers reasons for the motivation of and effects of intimate partner violence and the precocious terrorization of the Black woman. Some like to call the Black woman shameful or the cause of the violence.[11] This attitude is prevalent in the Black community. Another reason offered for the Black males' inability to enact traditional male roles in the family is social displacement and still another is the breakdown of the social order in the family and the community in general.[12] The feminist theorizes that the reason for violence against women is due to male dominance.[13] West quotes Elizabeth Stanko as saying; "The fact that all men do not exercise this right is irrelevant to the power afforded to men as a gender over women and as a gender."[14] In discussing cultural obstruction as a contributor to violence against women, West found that state and social agencies also present barriers to women's survival. An example of victim-blaming that was used in *Wounds of the Spirit,* also known as buck passing is as follows: Police say there's no point in making arrests when prosecutors will not prosecute, and prosecutors in turn say they cannot prosecute when (a) police do not arrest; or (b) judges will not sentence anyway. Judges say that women waste the court's time. Blaming the victim

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[9]West, *Wounds of the Spirit,* 92.

[10]Ibid., 95.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid., 101.

[13]Ibid., 105.

[14]Ibid., 109.

allows everyone in the system to pass the buck: and buck passing conveniently enables individuals within the system to acknowledge the problem without doing anything about it."[15] *Wounds of the Spirit* focuses on sexual violence; there is every reason to believe that physical, psychological, and emotional violence accompanies sexual violence. West includes simple and aggravated assault in the description of intimate assault.[16] Victims of such trauma are in urgent need of psychological and pastoral counseling because they have survived the abuse.

Michael P. Johnson in his article, "Gender and Types of Intimate partner Violence: A Response to an Anti-Feminist Literature Review" counters the anti-feminist attacks on what was called biases of social science to the gender paradigm.[17] Johnson says that statistics may be skewed to make it appear that men are the primary perpetrators, which may be true for one category but not another. Johnson shows that all intimate partner violence falls into three major categories. Johnson names Intimate Terrorism, Violent Resistance, and Situational Couple Violence as categories that must be considered in a feminist review on domestic violence.[18]

Intimate Terrorism (IT) is a pattern of violent coercive control that takes the place of the general term domestic violence. IT involves both physical and sexual violence that also includes any of the non-violent control tactics, i.e., economic or emotional abuse, and use of children, threats, and intimidation, blaming the victim and invoking male

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[15]Ibid., 117-118.

[16]Ibid., 209.

[17]Michael P. Johnson, "Gender and Types of Intimate Partner Violence: A Response to an Anti-feminist Literature Review," *Aggression and Violent Behavior,* vol. 16, (2011): 289.

[18]Ibid., 290.

privilege. This is the type of violence most seen by law enforcement and in courts. Johnson reported from other researcher's findings that misogyny and gender conformity rule plays a role in heterosexual IT.

Violent Resistance (VR) may respond to violence by instinct, others may not react until it is clear that the violence will not stop unless they do something to stop it. Most women are smaller than their male partners and have found that resistance makes things worse; consequently they find other ways to cope with the violence. Sometimes the violent partner is killed, but this happens in only a few cases.

Situational Couple Violence (SCV) occurs when conflict between couples escalate from arguments to violent aggression. Statistics show chronic outbreaks of violence in these situations. These cases are not due to control issues and are usually gender perpetrated.[19]

Of interest is the fact that survey responses were low in the area of intimate partner terrorism and situational violence. It is assumed that the lack of response is because perpetrators are slow to incriminate themselves and victims fear retaliations from their partners.[20] In faith communities, sometimes pastor or other respected church leaders are the perpetrators. This would also lend to silence from the pulpit and other places of leadership. Johnson's final statement on the subject was that most IPV cases whether male or female do not fit the power and control model of intimate terrorism. Situational couple violence is the most prevalent with men as the aggressors.[21]

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[19]Johnson, "Gender and Types of Intimate Partner Violence," 290.

[20]Ibid., 290.

[21]Ibid., 295.

The role of faith communities in the aftermath of domestic abuse is that of healer. The opportunity is great for the church to become an agent of support and empowerment to the person leaving such a situation. And, even if the person remains in the abusive home, the church must be seen as a safe place for the woman being battered. Clark, like many other writers and researchers describes the role of the church as an accountability symbol for the batterer, they should help the victim face the abuser, and teach men to model the example and nature of God.[22]

Brenda Ratcliff writes in a book review of Steven Tracy's *Mending the Soul,* that history has proven that abused women who turn to their clergy often stay in abusive relationships much longer than women who turn to secular counselors for help.[23] In discussing the community of faith, Ron Clark, author of *Setting the Captives Free: A Christian Theology for Domestic Violence,* writes that an abuser used Christianity as a tool against the victim when it teaches self-sacrifice.[24] The abuser in his selfishness seeks to control and manipulate, never intending to love, empower or better the other person. When the victim hear songs, sermons and attend classes that teach you to give yourself away, they take on the guilt of the problems in the relationship as a defense mechanism.[25] This allows the batterer to use these emotions to his advantage.

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[22]Ibid., 88-92.

[23]Brenda Ratcliff, "Mending the Soul: Understanding and Healing Abuse," *Christian Education Journal* 5, no. 2 (September 1, 2008), accessed November 16, 2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials EBSCOhost, 463.

[24]Ron Clark, *Setting the Captives Free: A Christian Theology for Domestic Violence* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2005), 87.

[25]Ibid., 88.

A mostly qualitative survey was conducted by the Society for Pastoral Theology in Atlanta, Georgia to investigate what is being taught about violence against women in pastoral care/counseling and pastoral theology courses. The survey was conducted between January and February 2004 with a 33% response rate (N=68), with a margin of error for standard deviation of (50%) of 9.82%+; margin of error for highly skewed distributions equaled 7.8%+ out of 80%+. The confidence level for standard distribution and confidence level for highly skewed were 68% and 79% respectively.

The highly skewed results being skewed to the positive raised the question of the true representation of the respondents? The question was asked whether members of the Society failed to return the surveys because they do not teach pastoral courses or if they fail to include material on violence against women in their courses and did not want to incriminate themselves. Trends proved highly reliable for those respondents who do include violence against women in their teaching.[26] Of the respondents, 97% do include information about violence in pastoral care, counseling, and pastoral theology coursework.

Assigned readings and films were the primary method of information transference. There was involvement with community agencies in the form of community service, guest speakers, and expert speakers being asked to come and share with the class or students being sent to volunteer. Narrative therapy or storytelling was also taught as a method for therapeutic intervention.[27] The findings were that of those responding to the survey there is intense attention given to the issue of violence against women in their

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[26]Pamela Cooper-White, "What Are We Teaching About Violence Against Women?," accessed November 9, 2013, *The Journal of Pastoral Theology*, vol. 14, no. 2, (Fall 2004): 49-50.

[27]Ibid., 59.

teaching. This means that those being sent out to serve in the church and in secular settings are being prepared to adequately address this issue. It was rare that a single course would be dedicated to the subject; however, most of the classes incorporated subject matter in their courses. It was reported to be a rare occasion that the subject was not addressed at all. Suggested readings for standard texts in the society on pastoral care and counseling were titles by Carol Adams, Pamela Cooper-White, Marie Fortune, Al Miles, Christy Neuger, James Poling, and Nancy Ramsay.[28] Others would include Ron Clark, Andrew Sung Park, Traci West, and Catherine Clark Kroeger and Nancy Nason-Clark. Care should be given that multi-cultural texts are used to encourage familiarity with diverse populations.

It is clear that progress has been made over the past two-three decades in educating clergy and pastoral care counsellors in ministering to victims of domestic violence. It behooves those receiving a formal education and the church to take advantage of training opportunities. This training will allow them as leaders to become a catalyst to advance prevention, intervention, judicial, political advocacy stratagems to be presented, religious, and social service agencies and in congregations in an effort to end violence against women.[29]

Marie M. Fortune and Cindy G. Enger presented at a research forum on the topic, "Violence Against women and the Role of Religion."[30] These women discussed the power of religious teachings on a woman who had experienced abuse and is a member of

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[28]Ibid., 64.

[29]Ibid., 67.

[30]Marie M. Fortune, and Cindy G. Enger, "Violence Against Women And The Role of Religion," (March 2005), *Applied Research Forum*, accessed November 9, 2013, National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women, www.vawnet.org, 1.

the faith community. From a multi-cultural perspective, it was noted that we do not just work with North American Women, but women from Roman Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Orthodox Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Native American would bring their diversity of beliefs, teachings and traditions to our place of safety. It was found that a significant number of these women bring with them "some aspects of religious beliefs and teachings could be either a resource or a roadblock."[31] Fortune and Enger make a very valid point, that a victim should not be forced to choose between safety and her religious beliefs. Consequently, the resources of community-based advocacy and shelters must come together with faith-based communities to provided services to victimized woman across cultural lines. Religious and cultural beliefs are main reasons for the amount of suffering experienced by a victim of intimate partner abuse.

As the church prepares to minister to the needs of a victim-survivor of domestic abuse or train its leaders, it is important to understand how scripture can hold that woman in bondage to the abuser. A survey of the Bible find many references of violence against women: i.e. Hagar (Gn 16 and 21), Dinah (Gn 34), Tamar (2 Sm 13), the Levite's concubine (Jgs19), Jephthah's daughter (Jgs 11), Vashti (Est 1), the persistent widow (Lk 18), the Samaritan woman (Jn 4), the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:1-11) and the damsel with the spirit of divination (Acts 16).[32] These and other Christian texts condone male dominance over women. These authors maintain that the fuller context of ethics, theology and doctrine of the text must be considered when using scripture to justify a

[31]Ibid.

[32]Fortune and Enger, "Violence Against Women and the Role of Religion," 2.

woman remaining in an abusive relationship. A batterer must be challenged with the very word he uses to justify his abusive actions When we add the ministry of Jesus who advises the purpose of the thief is to steal, kill and destroy (Jn 10:10), we cannot leave out the rest of this verse which reads, "I came that they may have life, and have *it* abundantly" (NASB). Jesus also declared in Luke 4:18 and Isaiah 61 his job "to proclaim release to the captives…." It is clear that these teachings point to the story of the Good Samaritan to highlight the mission of the church, which is to stop and care for the victim.[33]

It is equally important for the church to be reminded of the role childhood exposure to violence or abuse plays to shape the adult woman's perspective of the reality of abuse in her own life. In her book *Battle Cries Black Women and Intimate Partner Abuse,* Hillary Potter tells of the experiences of her grandmother to abandonment and mental abuse as a child.[34] Potter's Madea, learned early in life to stand up for herself, and like many women who grew up with abuse and violence early in life, did not learn to depend on God for that kind of protection.[35] Women are found to respond to abuse in many different ways; Black women self-report that they fight back at a higher rate than white women.[36] Johnson found that situational couple violence was most frequently a result of escalated aggression between couples, which was also Potter's findings.[37] In

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[33]Ibid., 2.

[34]Hillary Potter, *Battle Cries Black Women and Intimate Partner Abuse* Black *Women and Intimate Partner Abuse* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2008), 56.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid., 116.

[37]Johnson, *Gender and Types of Intimate Partner Violence*, 290.

situational violence, either the male or the female can initiate a physical altercation. Sometimes the woman just gets tired of being battered as is reported by several of the women interviewed by Potter.[38] Researchers found it was more common for a Black man to become a victim of homicide at the hands of the Black woman in 1976.[39] This stand up for yourself attitude is responsible for the fight in Black woman during this era. The response that led to the death of a Black man during a domestic dispute is also indicative of the Black woman's exposure to abusive relationships as an adult when abuse and violence were part of their childhood. Potter found that of the forty women she interviewed, thirty-three of them had early childhood introductions to violence either in the home or in the community.[40]

Of those who turned to the church for counsel in this study, 99% of the women were discouraged by the advice they received.[41] Some words of advice given by pastors to these women were to remain in the marriage, to pray, and try harder to please the man. Of women receiving this advice, more found it more damaging than helpful.[42] Muslim women reported they had more positive experiences with their clerics.[43]

In the research report entitled, "Clergy Response to Domestic Violence: A Preliminary Survey of Clergy Members, Victims, and Batterers" by Rotunda, Williamson, and Penfold, data was sought to document how best to gain the cooperation

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[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid., 117.

[40]Ibid., 56-57.

[41]Ibid., 197.

[42]Potter, *Battle Cries Black Women,* 197.

[43]Ibid.

of clergy and the religious community in the fight against the systematic problem of domestic violence.[44] Forty-one clergy members were surveyed regarding individuals or couples seeking their help for relief from domestic violence in the home. All of them reported having counseled either victims or perpetrators during their pastoral careers. It was documented that 43% of the battered and 20% batterer's turned to clergy for assistance.[45]

In sampling victims and batterers, this group found that half of their respondents preferred pastoral counseling over secular counseling. However, as discussed in Potter's research, clergy advice and the religious teachings of the battered proved to be both a blessing and a curse in helping to develop rules for nonviolence in a relationship.[46] Forty-three percent of the victims sought pastoral intervention versus 20% of the batterers. More victims of domestic violence attended church on a regular basis while the majority of the batterers did not.[47]

Conservative clergy members did not perceive aggression in the same way as the fundamentalist or liberal leaders. The patriarchal system continues to be a strong part of the Black religious faith, which can also be used to condone domestic violence rather than to insist that it is unacceptable behavior in the Christian faith. "Brinkerhoff, Grandin and Lupri define religious patriarchy as a set of personal, marital, and religious

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[44]Rob J Rotunda, Gail Williamson and Michelle Penfold, "Clergy Response to Domestic Violence: A Preliminary Survey of Clergy Members, Victims, and Batterers," accessed February 22, 2014, *Pastoral Psychology*, 52. No.4, (March 2004): 353.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Ibid., 354.

[47]Ibid., 363.

relationships that allow men to have power over women."[48] This definition when accepted by some religions can be used by the batterer to support his violent behavior.

This study shows a strong agreement of clergy that they would take steps to protect the victim rather than condone the behavior of the batterer, which is the tradition of the patriarchal rule. The researchers were satisfied with the awareness of the clergy to the dynamics of abusive relationships, however, found some reason to question if any of those responding were totally honest in their claims. It was noted that most clergy members suggested counseling to the victim and/or couple despite the fact that the social service agencies would not agree that this was the safest thing for the victim.

Judaism's place of safety for the victimized woman is the use of the phrase Shalom Bayit, which means peace in the home. It cannot be misconstrued that the responsibility for Shalom Bayit is a shared one between the man and the woman. Another important phrase in the Jewish culture is pikuach nefesh, which means to take action to save a life. The woman must push for the remembering and honoring of these phrases when violence is being perpetrated in the home. In the Islamic religion there are also texts that abusive men will use to justify their behavior. Any command from the Quran can be misused, from the instruction to hit the woman if she is disobedient to total control and abuse based on a command to protect and maintain a woman.[49]

Keri Day in *Unfinished Business: Black Women, the Black Church, and the Struggle to Thrive in America,* writes about the responsibility of the church to help the

[48]Ibid., 354.

[49]Fortune and Enger, "Violence Against Women and the Role of Religion," 3.

poor Black woman and the Black community rise from the poverty of oppression.[50] When writing about the financial status of the Black woman Kerri Day adds that one of the roles of the church in the Black community is as an institution and a prophetic voice against all of the isms that hold the Black woman down including abuse from domestic violence.[51] In explaining financial abuse on the Power Control Wheel, financial oppression has been one of the reasons women may be unable to leave domestic abuse situations, especially when the sole economic support comes from the abuser. Both the church and the system can also victimize the abused woman if she does not have the financial resources to pay for legal assistance. The church must take its place to provide care and support to women that will allow them to break the silence and receive the help she so badly needs which includes financial assistance.

In this role, the Black church is being called on to become a vehicle of transcendence for the poor and battered Black woman. As such, the church can help the woman find meaning in her struggles and foster hope for a brighter day as she learns to cope with the daily battles and destitutions she faces with the help of the church. Day's theory is important to the development of this project because it gives a way to show how poverty and financial control can be and is being used to hold the Black woman in a position of vulnerability. Day refers to how the "poor Black woman uses welfare as an immediate strategy to deal with domestic violence."[52] Day's writing also supports my belief that if the church is to be a vehicle of transformation for the abused Black woman,

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[50]Keri Day, *Unfinished Business Black Women the Black Church and the Struggle to Thrive in America* (New York, NY: Orbis Books), 14.

[51]Ibid., 16.

[52]Ibid., 85.

this institution must know how to address the economic power and control used by an abuser to keep his victim on a downward spiral. Keri Day challenges the church in the Black community to be the leader today in addressing the systemic issue of intergenerational poverty that is supported by society and government through programs that put a Band-Aid on the problem. It is through the church that the message of hope must be spread.

The review of literature and research adds to the validity of the hypothesis of this project that the Church can play an important role in restoring the voice of women who are victimized by domestic abuse by whatever name it is called. Scholars and researchers alike have shown through their writings that domestic violence is a global epidemic that needs to be addressed by the church. The patriarchal rule continues to be used as a right to abuse. As a result, many clergy members are hesitant to self-disclose as neither abusers nor are they willing to hold each other accountable for their behavior.

Oftentimes, clergywomen, minister's wives, military women, and professional women find it embarrassing to disclose the abuse with which they live. Though all women are affected, these women are most affected by the use and abuse of the patriarchal rule in society. These same populations of women are often slow to seek help in the system for various reasons, reasons that cause them to remain silent none-the-less. It is unknown if the percentage of these populations are included in the research that has been done.

Research shows that the education and training gap has been closed by the inclusion of domestic violence awareness in class and coursework at seminaries, colleges, and training programs. Statistics shows that these classes and systemic necessity makes it

necessary for the religious community to take responsibility for its care and support of victims of domestic abuse. From the literature reviewed, it is clear that women who are victimized by intimate partner abuse/domestic violence do need the assistance of the church to heal, recover, and be restored. Some women's faith becomes shaken or they become riddled with guilt or shame when the pastor or church leader challenges their faith in God to intervene rather than counselling the victim to seek safety. The remedy for this problem is to train clergy and memberships to become knowledgeable about what the scripture and the law says about domestic violence. Awareness of available resources in the city, State and Nation is also necessary if the church is to refer the victim to the best source of support. Rather than look outside itself for support and resources, the church should discover that it is the best resource for God to use as a vehicle for healing the hurting, recovery from the losses of abuse and restoration to the state that God intended for that person from before the beginning of time. From silence to shouting is a journey in itself when a woman who is victimized by these abuses is trying to recover her voice and become a spokesperson against such evil.

CHAPTER THREE

FOUNDATIONS

Biblical

On Thursday, February 28, 2013, the U. S. House of Representatives approved an expanded version of The Violence Against Women Act. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which does not exclude men, was first created in 1994 to provide funding for legal action against those who commit violent crimes against women and to establish an office within the Department of Justice that could enforce this act.[1] The Christian community calls domestic violence one of the most feared subjects. When it comes to supporting women who are victimized by this would be silent crime, many in the Christian community lack the education and training to adequately respond to the symptoms and cries of the victim. What makes this crime silent is the hesitancy of the victim to seek help, which would include telling on the abuser and advice from churches to go back home, submit to your husband, and tell no one. These are also the words of a perpetrator and a predator.

In the article "Domestic Violence in the African American Community: The Role of the Black Church," Lynda Marie Jordan writes, "Domestic Violence is defined as a pattern of abusive behavior in which a person uses coercion, deception, harassment humiliation, manipulation, and/or force to establish or maintain power and control over

[1]Bohy, Ric, "DesJarlais Votes No to Anti-Violence Law," *The Daily Herald*, Friday, March 1, 2013, vol. 114, No. 126, (Tennessee), (1 & 3b).

his or her intimate partner. Economic, emotional, psychological, physical, sexual, and verbal tactics are used by perpetrators to control and obtain power over their partners."[2]

Old Testament

Throughout the Old Testament, there is story after story of the cruel, inhumane, degrading and murderous mistreatment of women. The New Testament is not as clear or direct with the activities that are called domestic violence; however, Jesus spent much of his time in ministry bringing restoration and hope to the women who found themselves outcast from society because of their sins or situations that were not within their control.

Women in the Hebrew commonwealth when compared with those of modern Oriental society enjoyed a significant amount of freedom. They did not belong to harems nor were they required to appear in public with their faces covered. The women of ancient times were able to interact freely with men in the duties and affairs of daily life. Women were an important part of public life; they participated in celebrations, held public office as judges, prophetesses, or teachers. The woman managed the household and was otherwise recognized for her intelligence and influence.[3]

To introduce you to the lives of several women in the Old Testament who were victims of domestic violence, we will take a brief look at Hagar, an Egyptian slave who was mistreated and cast out first by her mistress, then by the father of her child (Gn 16). The second person we will look at is Jephthah's daughter; the victim of a violent death at the hands of her father on an oath that cost him the most precious person in his life (Jgs

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[2]Lynda Marie Johnson, *Domestic Violence in the African American Community*: *The Role of the Black Church*, accessed February 2, 2014, http://pluralism.org/affiliates/sered/Jordan.pdf.

[3]"Smith's Bible Dictionary," *Bible.org*., accessed February 2, 2104, https://bible.org/news/ bible-explorer-bibleorg-library.

11). The third person we will look at is Bathsheba; the question was asked was she a victim or a conspirator (2 Sm 11)?[4] The focus of this paper, however, will be on the Levite's wife and concubine of Judges 19. All of these texts represent the disempowerment of women because of their status in the First Century and how easily it is to turn a wife or a daughter into a slave or object for trade. A second observation of Judges 19 is the threat of rape by men who sought protection by offering in this case the wife and concubine. In Genesis 19, Lot's virgin daughters were offered to provide safety for the men, a second instance of attempted male rape.[5]

God became the first example of how the church should deal with domestic violence and abuse. In Western culture, interpreters of the Bible have taken a patriarchal stance that minimizes or covers the horror of the abuses and injustices to women in the Bible.[6] Few male pastors ever broach the subject of these topics from the pulpit so the congregation does not receive guidance from the leader on the stance of the church towards this silent villain. The protection of women is not only a church mandate; it has become a mandate on every level of our government. However, when the church neglect's to highlight stories of abuse from the Bible, it encourages and supports the silence of the suffering of women.

Hagar

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[4]John L. Thompson, *Reading the Bible With The Dead: What You Can Learn From The History Of Exegesis That You Can't Learn From Exegesis Alone* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 201.

[5]Raquel Kennedy Bergen, Jeffrey L Eddleson, & Caire M. Renzetti, eds., *Sourcebook on Violence Against Women* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001), 375.

[6]Thompson, *Reading the Bible With The Dead,* 4.

The earliest reports of abuse and mistreatment of women in the Old Testament is actually Sarai's attempt to make Abram a father through her servant/slave Hagar (Gn 16:2-11). Hagar became the third person in a triangle of an attempt on Sarai's part to fulfill God's delayed promise for a son.[7] Even in this situation, God provided for this abused woman not once but twice. The first time was when she left due to abuse from Sarai. The second time Hagar left the home of Abram and Sarai was when Abram sent her away with her child at Sarai's request (Gn 21:8-13, 17-20).

Hagar became Sarai's slave as a gift while they stayed in Egypt during a famine. Sarai became overcome with desperation at the lack of an heir for Abram and saw giving Hagar to Abram to bear his child as the solution to the problem. Abram is persuaded by Sarai to lie with Hagar who becomes pregnant and the whole plan begins to blow up in Sarai's face as the green-eyed monster called envy showed up. Sarai's abuse takes the form of mistreatment because of jealousy at seeing the pregnant slave girl. Hagar is accused of being lazy, disrespectful to her mistress, and proud of being pregnant with her master's child. Unable to take any more abuse, Hagar sees Egypt as a way of escaping the building hatred of Sarai her mistress.[8]

The second confrontation came after God had fulfilled the promise to Sarah and Abraham by first changing their name then allowing them to have a son, Isaac. This time, Ishmael is found to be taunting Isaac and Sarah insisting that Hagar and her son be expelled from their camp. Abraham is ordered by God to do as his wife has asked. This

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[7]Ibid.,13.

[8]Carol Shimmin Nordstrom, *Domestic Violence and Hagar: The Bible as Feminist Pilgrim,* Accessed May 3, 2013,. http://www.academia.edu/1299779/Hagar A_Portrait_of_a_Victim_of_ Domestic_Violence_and_Rape.

time, in the desert, God provides water and confirms his promise of a special heirship to Ishmael.

Bathsheba

This little spoken text of a silent woman turned concubine then wife, looks at whether Bathsheba was a victim or accomplice (2 Sm 11).[9] The answer is unequivocal that the wife of Uriah the warrior was a Victim. Bathsheba, through the abuse of power of a king, lost her status as a faithful wife, her husband to death, and became impregnated with a child she was destined to lose because of one man's sexual appetite.

Bathing does not become permission to be violated; yet King David saw Bathsheba and decided that he wanted to have her. Once David learned of Bathsheba's pregnancy, he then conspired to place the blame on Uriah by sending for him to come home to lay with his wife. This failing, David then planned to have Uriah killed in battle so that he could marry his wife and cover the affair that he began. Uriah was killed, making Bathsheba a widow who next became the wife of the man who was responsible for her husband's death. The third loss was the most hurtful even to David, because in his anger, God did not allow this child to live, nor did David know the joys of fatherhood due to his many acts of deception.

Who was there to hear the cries of Bathsheba? She cried when made to lie with the king in violation of her marriage vows. She cried when she became pregnant with a child that could never be proved to be her husband's and she faced the stigma of being an adulteress and killed for this crime. She cried and mourned when she became a widow at the loss of her husband in battle as part of a plot to have him killed in order that she might

[9]Ibid., 201.

become the wife of another man. She cried when the child conceived by rape became another loss in a line of many losses brought upon her by a selfish king. Did she willingly become the wife of such a man? Could she find happiness in the palace of a man with such lack of character and morals?

The Levite's Concubine
Judges 19:25

Another unnamed victim of violence in the Old Testament is called first the concubine of a certain Levite though he is called her husband (Jgs 19). The Mosaic Law allowed for the priests to take a wife, and this relationship was considered secondary or inferior.[10] A concubine is defined as "a female slave or mistress who became a man's wife. Often she remains in her father's house and her husband visited her occasionally."[11] This woman from Bethlehem in Judah was not much different from Bathsheba except during this time the scripture says there was no king in Israel (v. 1). The Bible says she became angry with her husband after four months and returned to her father's house (v. 2). Scripture does not tell the reason for her anger, it does not imply verbal, emotional or physical violence, but we can be sure that there was a reason for her unhappiness that caused her to leave her husband and go home.

The fact that the Levite pursued the woman indicates that she was more to him than just a concubine or second wife. The fact that the father-in-law entertained him for several days says that he was warmly thought of and the father wanted to see his daughter reconciled with her husband. While reading the text one should wonder what might have

[10]"Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary," *Bible.org.*, accessed February 9, 2014, https://bible.org/ news/bible-explorer-bibleorg-library.

[11]Jack W. Hayford, ed., *Spirit Filled Life Bible*, NKJV (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 360.

happened if the Levite had left a day or two earlier? In considering the saying that, "All things work together for good…" (Rom 8:28), how can this apply given the events that follow?

The men showed up to demand access to the Levite when they stopped at Gibeah of Benjamin to lodge for the night. The Easton's Illustrated Dictionary describes Gibeah, also known as "Gibeah of Saul" (1 Sm 11:4; Is 10:29) as a hill-town of Benjamin. This was the birthplace of Saul, and named as one of the ancient sanctuaries of Palestine, which causes it to also be called "Gibeah of God."[12]

The men at Gibeah were like those that showed up at Lot's house in Sodom. (Gn 19:8) The Clarke Commentary says they were of the original Sodomites, brutal; "a combination of beast and devil."[13] This seems to be the case since these men were bold enough to surround a man's home and demand his guest be sent to them for their sexual pleasure. It would seem that this was a way of life for the Sodomites or had they taken over the city of Gibeah as bullies? Why would these men have not already been dealt with? God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for this very crime, how did these men get to Gibeah, unless it really was a spirit that looked for a body to inhabit?

The act of hospitality was sacred in the East. It was expected that a man would defend the stranger to whom he gave lodging, even at the expense of his life. There is no excuse for the fact that the Gibeahites showed up, but just as intolerable is the fact that the father valued the rights of the visitor who was a stranger more than the life of his

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[12]"Easton's Illustrated Dictionary," *Bible.org.*, accessed February 9, 2014, https://bible.org/news/bible-explorer-bibleorg-library.

[13]"Adam Clarke's Commentary," *Bible.org.*, accessed February 9, 2014, https://www.logos.com/product/ 16526/the-works-of-adam-clarke.

daughter. What could have been the horror of the daughter as she learned that her father was betraying her in the most incomprehensible way? Who would believe that a father would not give his own life to save his daughter rather than his daughter to save the life of his male guest? Was there another way to deal with the threat that the Gibeahites posed to the old man and those in his house? The scripture says there was no king in Israel. Without a king, there was no civil government. Without a civil government there was no law and without law, Dr. Gina Stewart stated, in her message entitled, *Where There is no King in Israel*, "Everyone did what was right in their own eyes."[14] As Dr. Stewart continued to preach on this topic, she referred to this passage of scripture as a "depiction of the horror of misogyny, abuse, and annihilation."[15] She quoted Phyllis Trible, who refers to the story of this abuse and misuse of two women in her book *A Text of Terror*. Dr. Trible's reference to this text is also noted by Dr. Delores Williams in her book *Sisters in the Wilderness*.

The crowd of men requiring sex with the Levite received the old man's virgin daughter and the Levite's concubine. There was more than betrayal that these women experienced. There was failure to protect on the part of the Levite and the old man, there was the equivalence of prostitution without the exchange of money, there was self-preservation on the part of the men, and one writer said failure to trust God.

After a night of trauma and terrorization to these women, the concubine was left on the old man's doorstep the next morning. There is no word to the condition of the old man's daughter, she was not left on the doorstep, she was not caring for the concubine,

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[14]Gina Stewart, Sermon, "When There is No King in Israel" (Spring Intensive, United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, January 29, 2013).

[15]Ibid.

where was she? Who was there to sooth the trauma this woman had been through? Who would bind up her wounds and listen to her cries of anguish and frustration and maybe even physical pain?

The story says the Levite carried his concubine home, cut her in twelve pieces, tied these pieces on a horse, and sent it through the town, in a fashion that Jesus would call as a testimony against the Gibeahites. What ensued after the violence to these women was a civil war that saw all but 600 of the tribe of Benjamin dead as the tribes of Israel banded together to defend the honor of the Levite's wife.[16]

It is important that the dignity and image of these women were defended, but what would have been best is that the concubine had not lost her life to this form of violence, that she would not have been butchered, that the men had stood up for the women and for themselves.

New Testament

Jewish traditional rabbinic writings did not encourage respect of women. Women were not to be shown any courtesy in the street, they were not to be taught the law or allowed to receive an inheritance. Rights for a woman in Jewish culture were limited and she was under the control of the father, which passed to the husband upon marriage. The daughter had no say as to which she married and was sold for a dowry when she reached the appropriate age. It was also law that having intercourse with a woman would make her a gentile slave or be considered a marriage.[17]A woman did not serve in the

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[16]"Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary,"*Bible.org,*, accessed March 4, 2014, https://bible.org/news/bible-explorer-bibleorg-library.

[17]"Women in Ancient Israel," accessed March 3, 2013, http://www.bible-history.com/court-of-women.html.

synagogue. She could only receive instruction from her husband, their testimony in court was considered questionable, and she had no right to a divorce.

Jesus did not comply with the rules of purity, obedience to the Mosaic Law, kinship or other restraints of the first century A.D. Jesus' teachings focused on women, and they were used as figures of spiritual truths. Jesus became the person who put many women back in their places of recognition for things that are good. He affirmed women as valuable to the Kingdom of God, and insisted on their worth as human beings. Though he chose men to be apostles, Jesus did not leave women out of the task of telling the Good News.

For purpose of comparison, we shall take a transitional look at several women of the New Testament. The review of these women's interaction with Jesus will bring us to the focus of the New Testament text as we look at how Jesus, who represents the church in the earth, dealt with psychological, emotional, and physical abuse, which is also known as domestic violence.

The Woman Taken In Adultery

According to Adam Clarke's Commentary, "Some of the popish writers say that her name was Susanna; that she was espoused to an old decrepit man, named Manasseh; that she died a saint in Spain, whither she had followed St. James. These accounts the judicious Calmet properly terms fables."[18] What is certain is that men sought to entrap Jesus concerning the Law; this is the first reporting of this scripture, this is the only time Jesus is reported to have written anything, and this passage is considered canonical

[18]Adam Clarke, *Adam's Clarke Commentary*, accessed March 5, 2013, http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/cmt/clarke/joh008.htm.

through much of the worldwide church and is considered historical in its use by the church.[19]

The enforcement of the Mosaic Law was of interest to the Pharisees because Jesus was known to contradict it as reported in the Gospels. According to Deuteronomy 22:22-30, the behavior of the man is be examined with greater strength. Then he is to be judged according to the status of the woman.[20] Scripture is clear on the punishment that is to be allotted to the man and/or woman depending on the circumstances. There is no provision for the man to be set free, yet the men who approached Jesus was asking that the woman be stoned to death and the behavior of the man was not being addressed at all. There seemed to be no trial of witnesses, no attention was brought to the man, yet the report is that she was caught in the very act of adultery. This would mean that she was married, and the man she was with was guilty of lying with another man's husband; where was the man?

In spite of the embarrassment that this woman had to suffer, the shame of the situation and the threat of death, the real reason for this public display was to challenge Jesus as a prophet.[21] The wisdom of Jesus led him to remain silent in this situation and simply stoop down to write in the dirt. It is not said what was written, only that whatever he wrote brought conviction on the men in that when he arose only he and the woman were left. Jesus held to the Mosaic Law, which asked for two witnesses (Dt 17:6). No witnesses were left standing when Jesus rose up from the ground. He then told the

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[19]Carl B. Brides, "The Canonical Status of the Pericope Adulterate," (John 7:53-8:11), *Stone-Campbell Journal* 11 (Fall, 2008): 213-221.

[20]Ibid., 172.

[21]Charles P Bailys, "The Woman Caught in Adultery: A Test of Jesus as the Greater Prophet," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April-June 1989: 176.

woman that she was free, instructing her to sin no more. How many people would be liberated after the Word was applied to their situations? How many questions are asked or situations are devised to catch the prophet? This would make women, then, pawns in the hands of unscrupulous people.

The Damsel with a Spirit of Divination

An example of human trafficking and exploitation is the story of a young woman with a spirit of divination who made money for her owners by telling fortunes (Acts 16:14-20). In the Greek text, the girl or damsel is said to have been possessed with a spirit of divination, also called the "spirit of Python." In Hebrew, this word means serpent.[22] The Jews consider the spirit of Python to be the same as Ob, which is also called "a familiar spirit," (Lv 20:27, Dt 18:11). The Septuagint refers to this spirit as a ventriloquist; one that seemed to speak out of her belly, others called her clairvoyant.

What we know about her is that she was from Philippi.[23] We do not know her exact age, her family status, or why she seemed to be under the influence and/or physical power of such unscrupulous men. We do not know how she became the slave of these men. When she started to follow Paul and Silas around town during their ministry, Paul cast the demon out of the girl and her powers were gone. The owners were displeased at the loss of their income. In modern times this woman would be equivalent to a prostitute. Unlike pimps that were used to having money brought to them by the women they sell, the slave owners were able to have Paul and Silas arrested and thrown in jail.

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[22]*John Gill's Exposition of the Bible*, accessed March 12, 2013, http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/acts-16-16.html.

[23]David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 457.

There is no information on how the girl was treated before or after the exorcism, however, it is certain that she needed intervention and spiritual counseling. In the Gospels, Jesus would have cast the spirit out of her. Paul followed Jesus' example and set the girl free.

The Samaritan Woman
John 4:25

This text opens with Jesus coming to Samaria where he meets a woman at a well at noon. The Assyrians named Samaria, located in a region of Palestine probably in about 722 B.C. from its capital city.[24] Scholars have voiced differences of opinions as to whether the detour through Samaria was because of the geographical convenience or for theological reasons.[25] The mission for which, Jesus says he must go through Samaria, turned into an evangelistic message that brought understanding of true worship to the entire region. Not only was this an evangelistic assignment, it was also a mission of freedom and acceptance for a woman in that town. This woman was about to be freed from being outcast and become a lesson of inclusion in the beloved for the people of Samaria. She was about to become liberated from the very life that had caused her to be shut out and isolated.

Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman is said to be one of the longest dialogues in the Gospel.[26] The fact that Jesus spoke to this woman was breaking the

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[24]Urban C Von Wahde, "The Gospel and Letters of John" *Commentary on the Gospel of John,* vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 170.

[25]*The New Interpreter's Bible General Articles & Introduction, Commentary, & Reflections for each book of the Bible Including The Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books in Twelve Volumes,* Vol. XI, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 565.

[26]Ibid.

traditions and the custom of the Jews during the first century. There were two strikes against the woman of Samaria. First, she was not a pure breed and not accepted by the culture. Second, she was a woman. The Samaritans were a people of mixed blood, brought to the area much like the slaves of Africa. According to Maxine Thomas, the Samaritan woman was plagued by racism, sexism, and classism.[27] This woman experienced racism because of her mixed blood; sexism because she was a woman; and classism because they were considered a poor class of people. Yet, thirteen times Jesus is recorded to have made conversation with her at Jacob's well.[28]

Being at a well indicates that both people had a thirst for water. This is the first time that Jesus displays his humanity by acknowledging that he was thirsty. The second time was on the cross at Calvary. The time of day is described as noon, which indicates that the woman was coming to the well at a time that other townspeople were not know to come. To meet a man at the well who was actually willing to have conversation with her was an unexpected occurrence. The conversation opened over the topic of water. Jesus asked for water, the woman in her surprise, did not know how to respond except by asking a question, why are you asking me for water? She was speaking of H^2O from Jacob's well and he was talking about water that could only be provided from the well within. Her question led to his answer and the dialogue that gave Jesus an opportunity to introduce the subject of salvation. Jewish custom was that a Jewish man did not speak to

[27]Maxine Thomas, "Worship While You Work" (sermon preached at the Women in Ministry East Tennessee Annual Conference, Chattanooga District, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Pulaski, Tennessee May 18, 2003).

[28]*The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*, 565.

an unknown woman, nor was a Jewish rabbi to speak with a woman in public at all.[29] Also, Jews were not to have any social interaction with Samaritans at all.[30]

There are the customary uses for water such as cooking, bathing, and cleaning, but what else can we do with water besides drink it? We use water to clean scrapes and scratches. Water can be used to cool burns and stings. Water can be used to wash away dirt and stains. It is these other accepted uses for water that Jesus is about to introduce to the woman. It is this conversation with the Rabbi that will change the course of her whole life and deliver her from those who used their hang-ups to keep her shut down, shut out, and held back in life.

The most important part of the exchange between Jesus and the Samaritan woman was the question asked by Jesus in verse 16 in which Jesus asks the woman about her husband. The issue about the husband turned into a declaration by Jesus that she was not only living in sin currently, but she had six other men that she called husband to whom she no longer belonged. Theologians thought she was evading the question by asking another question. It is believed that this woman was a sinner and had lived an immoral life.[31]

Was this Samaritan woman in multiple marriages because she could not please her husband? Could she not cook or clean? Did she not please her husband in bed? What if the man just wanted someone else and used the law to send her away? What if she could not have children and this made her unwanted? The Law of Moses allowed a man

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[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid., 566.

[31]Ibid., 567.

to divorce his wife if she did not please him by giving her a certificate (Dt 24:1). The Levitical law says that only the man can initiate a divorce and gave specific reasons for which this act could take place. Where a dowry was involved, the dowry had to be returned to the family of the woman when the man left her. In some instances there were reasons for which the man could be made to continue to care for the woman. Moses said he issued a writ of divorce to keep the man from killing the woman in order to get rid of her (Mk 10:4). What if she was trapped in an arranged marriage like Tamar or the Levities concubine (Dt 25:5-10; Jgs 19: 1-2).[32] The first century culture in which a woman was without a son or husband became a cast away. She was open for abuse and extortion by the unscrupulous and the unethical. Maxine Thomas described her as a woman of depression, doubt, and fear.[33] In today's society, few women want to be without a man in her life. Jesus presents to the woman at the well, the acceptance she needed.

One thing that is observed about Jesus' interaction with women of that day is that he never left them like he found them. If they needed healing, they were healed, if they needed deliverance, they were delivered, if they needed money, it was provided. The women in Jesus' circle were such that he not only healed and delivered, but he restored and raised them to a level of honor they could have never gotten without him.

So, what did Jesus bring to this woman who has suffered rejection, abuse, and mistreatment? What was it about the water from Jacob's well that Jesus redirected his path to meet this woman? How long had he known of the thirst in her soul that only the Spirit could satisfy?

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[32]Ibid.

[33]Thomas, "Worship While You Work."

Jesus' ability to answer the woman's questions allowed her to recognize him as a prophet. The theological mission of the text begins to unveil as the Samaritan woman who could tell her all she had ever done and keep talking to her as a display of the love of God. Here Jesus represents the Church. He represents forgiveness. He represents mercy. He represents compassion. He represents restitution. As a representative of today's missionary Church, Jesus represents the external care of the body of Christ to a sister in distress. The Church of the living God is to act as the neighbors of old, and come to the aid of a sister who needs her scratches and scrapes cleansed and bound by the hands of mercy, she needs her burns and blisters of a bad relationship cooled by the water of compassion; she needs the dirt and stain of ugly words soothed by words of kindness. As representative of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Jesus presents forgiveness, healing, restoration, and elevation. We, then, as representatives of Jesus, can do no less. There is a mantel, a mandate left by Jesus to love one another. In John 25:40 he tells the Church, "I as much as you do it to the least of these my little ones, you do it unto me."

Outwardly, this woman received cleansing from her past and status in the Kingdom of God. She also received respect, acceptance, and validation by a man of the Jewish community. Inwardly, she received a new life from living water, a quench for her thirst that would never end, a right to worship God wherever she was, and she received a self-respect that could not be changed by the dictates of society.

Historical Context

In her book *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence-From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror,* Judith Herman begins by saying:

> The ordinary response to atrocities is to banish them from consciousness. Certain violations of the social compact are too terrible to utter aloud thus is the meaning of the word un-speakable.
>
> Atrocities, however, refuse to be buried. Equally as powerful as the desire to deny atrocities is the conviction that denial does work. Folk wisdom is filled with ghosts who refuse to rest in their graves until their stories are told. Murder will out. Remembering and telling events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for healing of individual victims.[34]

Women have lived through as many plagues, wars, famines, depressions, and tragic events as men.[35] In addition to these difficulties, women have borne children and continued to work alongside the man, yet they do not receive the respect, appreciation, or the credit they deserve. Historically, men have held titles and positions as generals, kings, politicians, doctors, lawyers, writers, composers, scientists, and landowners. Initially women were wives, mistresses, mothers, daughters, and sisters.[36] Codes and laws were written and implemented that allowed and condoned the abuse of women as correction for bad behavior. Today women have also joined the ranks of generals, writers, politicians, doctors, lawyers, scientists, and landowners. Depending on the security of the male in the relationship, the woman might experience acts of violence and abuse in the form of physical, psychological, emotional, financial, and social restraint. Margaret Mead in *Male and Female* states that when comparing occupations of men to women, the man

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[34]Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence-From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1992), 1.

[35]Vern L Bullough, *The Subordinate Sex A History of Attitudes Toward Women* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 3.

[36]Ibid.

will receive the greater recognition no matter what he does, even if it was a traditional female vocation such as cook or a stay at home husband.[37] Even in the reversal role of the one who stays at home to care for the children and the home and the woman earns the family income, the male can be found in the role of batterer. Down through history, society has accepted that the man may practice some trades that women are not allowed to. Sometimes this egotism leads to the abuse of power and domestic abuse as trauma to victimized women.

As we continue to look at the history of domestic violence and abuse as trauma, we come to understand several things: First, we have to look at the extent to which many have gone and will go to cover-up, cloak, and hide the fact that this type of violence takes place. Second, we are forced to admit that there are few places for the victim to turn for safety and intervention. Thirdly, we are amazed at the fact that all too many people, agencies and organizations, including the church, are more comfortable pretending this elephant is not in the room.

In early reports of history the household was acknowledged as the principal institution for keeping order in society. The ancient Greeks also adopted these rules. Their formal opinion of how the household should be managed became known as the household codes, also known as Haustafel by the Germans.[38] These codes allowed for the torture and mistreatment of women at the will of the male or husband. Eastern cultures allowed for women to be murdered in the name of honor, while Western cultures did not

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[37]*Violence Against Women in Tennessee: Our Philosophy and Our Work* (Nashville, TN: Tennessee Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, 2012), 2.

[38]Kruse Kronicle, "The Household Code," Jul 02, 2007, accessed August 14, 2013, http:/ /krusek ronicle. typepad.com/kruse_kronicle/2007/07/household-the-h.html.

give women social or legal rights at all. The husband had total control of the woman, the children, and the finances. The father was allowed to arrange the marriage of the daughter.[39]

The men contributing to these household codes were often accused of being misogynists-haters of women. Their harsh referral to women and the allowance of mistreatment of women, children and slaves, earned the use of the word misogyny.[40] However, Ben Sire of the Second Century was accused of misogyny because he was known for rewriting historical sayings to portray women in a negative light.[41]

When speaking of the treatment of women in Ancient Egypt, families allowed the daughters to inherit, write wills, and leave their property just like their brothers. Where there was a dowry, the property was held in the hands of the person who was the guardian of the woman.[42] In this way, women were protected from being jilted by their spouse.

Women in Athens, Greece were not allowed to own more than clothes, jewelry, and a personal slave. They did not have the privilege of making contracts and purchases had to be approved by a male guardian that would be her father, husband or immediate male relative. The guardian would choose a husband for the female when it was time to marry. Negotiations were made according to the size of her dowry, the larger the dowry the richer the husband.[43] Though the husband could spend the dowry on whatever he

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[39]Abdul Rahman Malik, "Resisting Violence Against Women," accessed August 5, 2013, http://www.trcb.com/News-and-Society/Crime/Resisting--Violence--Against-Women-1366.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Kronicle, "The Household Code."

[42]James C. Thompson, "Women in the Ancient World," revised July, 2010, accessed August 12, 2013, http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/dowry%20and%20bride%20price.htm.

[43]Ibid.

wanted, it remained the property of the wife. When there was a death or divorce, according to ancient Athenian law, the value of the dowry remained as insurance for the wife, however, a male family member: son, father, or brother, would still need to handle property that she owned. Consequently, a woman without a male family member to care for her was in a risky position. Even in biblical times, a woman without a male as guardian for her and her holdings became a castaway, and was poorly treated.[44]

In Rome before the Second Century B.C.E., women's dowries usually consisted of only a small plot of land. The land and a few household articles were accepted as normal in exchange for the marriage of a daughter. The upper class Romans would present a more sizable dowry in value. It was not unusual for a man to leave his wife and marry someone with a larger dowry. The rules concerning the dowry was one means of ensuring that the woman was able to take care of herself if the husband decided to divorce her and marry someone with a larger dowry or should she become a widow. In these instances, the dowry would return to the woman. If the woman committed adultery, the husband could retain one-sixth of the dowry. The dowry, though returning to the care of the guardian, was always in the possession of the woman.[45] The dowry did not protect her from physical, psychological, emotional, or financial abuse.

In France, during the fourteenth century, husbands could beat their wives if they disobeyed them. The only restrictions were that he could not "kill or permanently maim her."[46] In 1427, Bernard of Siena, Italy advised men to treat their wives like fowl and

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[44]Thompson, "Women in the Ancient World."

[45]Ibid.

[46]Barbara Wesler, *Violent Relationships: Battering and Abuse Among Adults* (Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Group: 2003), 1.

livestock. When they disobeyed, beating was rarely suggested as the first response. If she would not correct her behavior after being scolded, bullied and terrified, she was then to be beaten with a stick. These were the rules on marriage for Siena.[47]

When referring to violence against women it is believed to have a direct correlation to worldwide economic injustice and unjust arrangements. We find this characteristic of patriarchy both within the church and in society. Patriarchy, also known as male privilege, involved the capture or buying of brides which today would be the equivalence of human trafficking.[48]

> Patriarchy is identified as a system of "graded subjugation" in which some have power over others. This power can be manifested in economic, political, social or cultural terms.
>
> Crisis points in the world manifest the general culture of violence and Militarism, pervading political, economic, social and cultural life in every region. Global economic and social structures create the atmosphere for unequal power relations between and within the nations. This engineers inequalities and keeps the atmosphere of violence intact of which women are special targets.
>
> In every society, women are the most vulnerable, and along with children, the ones who bear the brunt of the world's injustice. Their sexuality is exploited, as is evident from the image of women projected in the media. Their labor is exploited and any crisis in the economic structure hits women first..
>
> Whatever its form, violence has its roots in distorted power relations. Patriarchal violence has not been adequately understood nor acknowledged as a necessary framework for analyzing structural inequalities in society. Yet unless there is a shift in the way unequal power relations are defined and a challenge to concepts that legitimize the imbalance of power in the hands of a few, who are largely males, there is no way to tackle the systemic roots of the violence against women, nor to respond adequately to individual incidents.[49]

As we look at the problems related to patriarchy, it is clear that churches and society must establish ways to prevent and eliminate violence of any kind by men.

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[47]Ibid., 1.

[48]"Violence Against Women in Tennessee," 5.

[49]Antje Heider-Rottwilm, "Violence Against Women: A Challenge to the Churches' Solidarity," accessed February 2, 2014, *The Ecumenical Review*, 46 no. 2 (Apr. 1994): 174.

Policies should also be implemented within the authority of both sectors to protect women from abusive men and to hold men accountable for their actions. Others have identified men that are trained in the military as special offenders who need intervention with the same or similar background. Specially trained counselors understand the depths of the wounds and the heightened secrecy of this abuse.

Significant to sixteenth century history are the witch-hunts in Europe. These witch-hunts are of interest to the history of domestic violence because misogyny was the basis of their actions. Here, men seemed to prey on women as the weaker vessel and object of their devilish inspired hatred.[50] Stories about European persecution of their own women became sensational because of the alarming statistics reported about the hunts. During this era, more than 100,000 men and women (85% were women) were imprisoned and executed for what was called serving the Devil.[51] Some women were asked by judges to tell of their sex lives with the devil, while court officials mutilated other women, by amputations or by being strapped to racks to have their bodies searched for marks of the devil. Another source reports that those dead were between 50,000 to 200,000 with 95% of the dead being women.[52] Though men and women prisoners were forced to endure these assaults, torture usually had sex as its angle and women were the objects of these persecutions. During these times, men were the perpetrators of this violence against mostly women. Judges, jailors, executioners, all men, became the abusers of these defenseless women.[53]

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[50] *Violence and Memory: The Politics of Denial*, 596.

[51] Ibid., 595.

[52] *Violence Against Women in Tennessee,* 3.

[53] Ibid.

During the seventeenth century, England also influenced the laws surrounding the rape of women. In 1671, Sir Matthew Hale wrote the decision, "Because rape is a charge so easily made and so difficult to defend against, it should be examined with greater caution than any other crime." This pronouncement, which initially seemed to be referencing wife rape, would influence the rape laws in the United States for the next 300 years.[54]

Another law related to wife abuse was the rule of thumb became a term in the English court in the 1600s. This court's decision was that a husband could legally assault his wife as long as the stick used was no larger than his thumb. The Oxford English Dictionary as the official meaning of the term did not uphold this definition. Also to be noted is that Sir William Blackstone, a well-known English orator, never referred to a rule of thumb, but rather to an ancient rule allowing domestic violence in English law. The husband's right to abuse his wife, also called, chastisement, was abolished from England statutes in 1829. The rule of thumb was challenged in 1982 in a U.S. Commission on Civil Rights report about domestic violence (Under the Rule of Thumb: Battered Women and the Administration of Justice).[55]

In the early nineteenth century, piety though expected of a woman, could be turned on the woman and used to label her mentally deranged.[56] This stereotyping became a cause of convenience for suicides among women. Women were also taught the behavior necessary to remain pure. Men, on the other hand were told what to do to get

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[54]*Violence Against Women in Tennessee,* 8.

[55]*Violent Relationships Battering and Abuse Among Adults*, 2.

[56]Elaine Fortin, "Early Nineteenth Century Attitudes Toward Women and Their Roles in Literature Popular in Worcester, Massachusetts," *Teach Us History.Org.*, accessed August 14, 2013, http://www.teachushistory.org/detocqueville-visit-united-states/articles/early-19th century.

back on track when they had strayed into immoral behavior. Men were taught to respect a woman's innocence and to consider it a favor when she stopped him from violating her wishes.[57]

Military men have used this same stereotype against women in the United States military who are victims of rape. Numerous breaking news reports have surfaced since 2012 about the hidden and uninvestigated reports by hundreds of thousands of military women who report to their superior officers that they have been raped. Deranged is not the word that is used against these women for bringing such violations to light, crazy is. These women were most often labeled, discharged, and placed on disability for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). If they remained silent to stay in the military, they were likely to be raped again by the same perpetrator.

By the 21st century, Europe had formed a Task Force Council to Combat Violence against Women, including domestic violence.[58] This Task Force established the responsibility of every State to respect, protect, and fulfill the human rights of all citizens. States were also charged with the duty to establish policies to prevent, investigate, and punish all violence against women.[59]

Acts of violence against women and society in general in the 21st century include the Holocaust and other acts of genocide. When remembering the Holocaust and genocide attempts in war torn Cambodia, Bosnia and Rwanda, the words of Margaret Atwood remarked in 1505 can be used. She remarked, "As a rule, we tend to remember

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[57]Ibid.

[58]Ministers' Deputies CM Documents, *Task Force to Combat Violence Against Women, Including Domestic Violence* (EG-TFV), CM (2006) 93 Addendum final 21 June: 206.

[59]Ibid., 1.

the awful things done to us and to forget the awful things we did."[60] In this essay, Barstow goes on to report thousands of persons are tortured under the disguise of interrogations not just in war torn countries as named above but also in this United States, while authorities look the other way. Retired Generals and Admirals reporting that torture as counterproductive, unreliable, immoral, and illegal have made statements. These people have signed a petition as they take a stand against unethical treatment of prisoners of war or U.S. citizens.[61]

In spite of the laws to protect victims of violence, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey of 2010 reported:

- In excess of one in three women (35.6%) and more than one in four men (28.5%) in the US have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate.
- Approximately one in four women (24.3%) and one in seven men (13.8%) have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner in the form of hitting, beating, or slammed with something.
- Nearly one in five women (18.3%) and one in seventy-one men (1.4%) in the United States have been raped …
- More than half (51.1%) of female victims of rape reported being raped by an intimate partner and 40.8% by a familiar associate; for male victims, more than half (52.4%) reported being raped by someone they knew and 15.1% by a stranger.
- An estimated 13% of women and 6% of men have experienced sexual coercion (i.e., unwanted sexual penetration after being compelled in a nonphysical way); and 27.2% of women and 11.7% of men has experienced unwanted sexual contact.

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[60]Anne Llewellyn Barstow, "The Politics of Denial," *Journal of American Academy of Religion*, vol. 68, no. 3 (September 2000): 594.

[61]Brenda Bowser-Soder, "Retired Military Leaders: Torture is Counterproductive, Unreliable, Immoral and Illegal," *Human Rights First*, accessed March 3, 2013, http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/press-release /retired-military-leaders-torture-counterproductive-unreliable-immoral-and-illegal.

- One in six women (16.2%) and one in nineteen men (5.2%) in the United States have experienced stalking victimization during their life that made them fear harm and/or for their life.

- Two-thirds (66.2%) of female victims of stalking have been stalked by an existing or former intimate partner, 41.4% of men were staked by an intimate partner and 40% by an acquaintance.

- Most persons experiencing violence by an intimate partner experience one or more of the following short-term or long-term psychological effects: being fearful, concerned for safety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), need for health care, injury, contacted a crisis hotline, need for help with housing, used a victim's advocate or legal services, or missed at least one day from work or school.

- Of women who have experienced rape in the America, nearly one in five Black (22%), White (18.8%), NON-Hispanic women, and one in seven Hispanic women (14.6%). More than one-quarter of American Indian women (26.9%) and (33.5%) Alaska Natives reported the same thing.[62]

This data, as shown above, was collected from 16,507 adults over the age of eighteen. (9.086 were women and 7,421 were men. This project was supported by the National Institute of Justice and the Department of Defense. The findings of the first year of collected data were published in a summary report in November 2011.[63]

As of 2011, there were more than 2,500 domestic violence and sexual assault centers in the United States.[64] The 2013 National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence reports that more than 1,300 states, local, national and Tribal organizations support millions of victims of sexual and domestic violence. Their research showed the danger of firearm possessions by those who commit such acts of violence. The research

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[62]"The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report,"*Center for Disease Control and Prevention.* November 2011, accessed December 2, 2014. http://www.cdc.gov/violence prevention/ pdf/nisvs_executive_summary-a.pdf.

[63]Ibid.

[64]*Violence Against Women in Tennessee,* 16.

indicates that persons are capable of committing a murder that causes the death of the victim and sometimes others.[65]

We cannot forget the breaking news of military rape that began to surface in 2011-12 as thousands of women both enlisted and discharged began to tell their stories of being sexually assaulted while in the military. Stories of being labeled as crazy, being told to forget it ever happened, and being forcefully discharged because they dared to break the silence of the abuse has been told in the news media. In an April 2012 report by Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), it was stated, "While sexual assaults are under-reported, this problem is exacerbated in military settings. In 2010, out of the 19,000 sexual assaults that occurred in the military, the Department of Defense (DOD) estimates that only 13.5% of survivors reported the assault." In 2011 there were 3,192 reports of sexual abuse in the military.[66]

In conclusion, this work "creates a better understanding of the prevalence, impact and health consequences of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking as domestic violence."[67] It is also the intent to increase the awareness of clergy, lay leaders, and other organizations on the subject of domestic violence in hopes that there will be a change in the historical attitude of indifference to the oppression of women. We have looked at the socio-cultural laws and institutions that have shaped the misconception that

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[65]"National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women," *Letter to United States Senators*, May 1, 2013, accessed August 14, 2013, accessed August 14, 2013, http://www.ncdsv.org/publications_vawa.html.

[66] "Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military" *Service Women's Action Network, Rape, The Quick Facts*, April 2012, accessed August 19, 2013, http://servicewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/ 2012 /06/RSASH-Quick-Facts_April-2012-FINAL.pdf.

[67]"National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation." National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, accessed March 3, 2013. http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/ pdf/ NISVS_SOfindings.pdf.

domestic violence is a topic that is to be kept between the abuser and the victim. Highlights of the history of women as victims of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, battered women, and/or victims of war have been reviewed as terminology has been modernized in this conspiracy of silence. It is hoped that this information will be used to empower, protect, and support, women who suffer in silence and desire to move out of a place of abuse into a position of self-sufficiency and increased self-worth.[68] Based on these facts, churches must join the ranks of institutions through which these silent cries can be heard and addressed.

Theological Foundations

> Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."[69]

Women are forced to suffer in silence from domestic violence abuse because the church does not encourage disclosure. When disclosure is made to church leadership, many times the church is unprepared to minister to the wounded, rejected, and emotionally battered as representatives of God. Other times, the church is not ready to deal with the abuser because he is in leadership, male, and sometimes the pastor himself. Sometimes women are told to submit, other times they are told to pray and trust God, but rarely are they told to leave.

This section seeks to review the position of various theologians on the subject of domestic violence, intimate partner abuse, spousal abuse, battering, family violence,

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[68]Sara Manzano-Diaz, "Break the Silence of Domestic Violence," United States Department of Labor, November 1, 2011, accessed 7-3-2013, http://social.dol.gov/blog/break-the-silence-of-domestic-violence/.

[69]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Quotes," accessed October 21, 2013, http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/ 29333.Dietrich_Bonhoeffer.

and/or dating abuse. Any of these words can be used to describe a pattern of behavior, which involves the abuse of one person against another when the two are in an intimate relationship together. This relationship may or may not include a family. The pain associated with abuse can be alleviated when church leaders and lay members are equipped and willing to meet the challenge of becoming a vehicle of healing and restoration. The desire is that when church leaders and laity recognize that domestic violence is at epidemic proportion, women who are suffering in silence will be encouraged to seek refuge in the hospital of the Lord which should be the church![70]

The Bible has been used as the primary source of reporting abuse as a systemic crisis and it has remained that way for centuries. We find the human propensity to sin has been a problem since the Garden of Eden. The atonement of man by God is also a familiar subject of discussion for theologians. It is easy for men to speak of woman as the origin of sin because of Eve's interaction with the snake; however, sin-talk has its origin between Adam and God.[71] The commandment to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was given to Adam. After the instructions were given, it became Adam's responsibility to protect Eve from the tree and the snake that came to tempt her. The first act of abuse came when Adam blamed the woman for being deceived. Hence, when it comes to talking about sin, what leads to sin and the results of sin, one theologian says there is a human tendency to ignore and resist the discussion of sin altogether.[72]

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[70]Linda L. Ammons, *The Plight of Black Battered Women,* accessed December 2, 2013, http:// academic. udayton.edu/health/01status/violence04.htm.

[71]Alistair McFadyen, *Bound to Sin Abuse, Holocaust and the Christine Doctrine of Sin*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 14.

[72]Ibid.

The creation story was discussed in *Theological Reflections on Violence and Abuse.* Here, the judgmental attitudes of several first century theologians were shared. Rather than looking at Adam as the leader who sinned, Eve is seen as the prototype of women by Augustine. He decided, therefore that all women were dangerous to men. Augustine writes in *The Literal Meaning of Genesis* that because of sin, "woman deserves to have her husband for a master..." If this order is not maintained, he warned, "nature will be corrupt still more, and sin will be increased."[73] This statement is amusing considering that many men, even those who are professing Christian leaders, are adulterers, pedophiles, rapists, stalkers, abusers, and womanizers. Yet, Augustine puts the full weight of sin on the woman without placing any burden on the man whose job it is to guide her.

Biblical interpreters like Thomas Aquinas used genesis as a primary source of theological reflection on women for many centuries. Aquinas used the creation story as a basis of discussion of men and women's natures and roles. He considered that women were inferior to men. This inferiority, according to Aquinas made them only valuable for reproductive purposes.[74] Aquinas' writings about women had a significant impact on theological thought.

During the Reformation period, women were considered to be morally deficient. This meant that a man was needed to keep her morally correct.[75] Theologians used this line of thought to justify that women were secondary in status, which is the exact position

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[73]Nancy E.Nienhuis, "Theological Reflections on Violence and Abuse," *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling*, 59, no. 1-2: 109-123, accessed October 16, 2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

[74]Ibid., 116.

[75]Ibid., 117.

that was given to slaves. Though Martin Luther and John Calvin declared that women were as much a reflection of the image of God as men, they added, "She was nevertheless not the equal of the male in glory and prestige."[76] Luther further remarked that due to their role in the fall, they are also considered subordinate to men in life.

Calvin believed that the place of the woman was under complete authority of the man, which is also called the "theology of ownership."[77] He advised training of women is the responsibility of men and women are not to rebel against his instruction. When speaking theologically, Calvin advised a woman running from her abusive husband the following:

> We have a special sympathy for women who are evily [sic] and roughly treated by their husbands, because of the roughness and captivity, which is their lot. We do not find ourselves permitted by the Word of God, however, to advise a woman to leave her husband, except by force of necessity; and we do not understand this force to be operative when a husband behaves roughly and uses threats to his wife, not even when he beats her, but only when there is imminent peril to her life, whether from persecution by the husband or by his conspiring....We exhort her to bear with patience the cross which God has seen fit to place upon her; and meanwhile not to deviate from the duty which she has before God to please her husband, but to be faithful whatever happens.[78]

Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza advocates a hermeneutic of suspicion, which suggests that we should be suspicious when texts are used to encourage or support oppressive power relationships in society, especially in the church.[79] To support this

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[76]Ibid.

[77]Ibid., 118.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Ibid. To read more on a hermeneutic of suspicion, see Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *Bread Not Stone: The Challenge of a Hermeneutic of Biblical Interpretation* , Boston, MA: Beacon, 1984, 15-18. "According to Paul Ricoeur, the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' is "a method of interpretation which assumes that the literal or surface-level meaning of a text is an effort to conceal the political interests which are served by the text. The purpose of interpretation is to strip off the concealment, unmasking those interests.", accessed 12-4-2013, http://rsa.cwrl.utexas.edu/?q=node/2075.

viewpoint, James Poling, in his book *The Abuse of Power: A Theological Problem*, considers that human fear and arrogance are used to create dominance and exploitation in the distortion of power.[80] When looked at in context of how power is used and abused, it becomes clear that power can be a function for or against life depending on the purpose of its use.

William S. Schmidt, when referring to Poling writes of how Poling arrives at a definition for the nature of power as "a manifestation of relational agendas which either move persons toward greater creativity and freedom or toward control and domination."[81] Poling finds that human fear and arrogance are the biggest factors that contribute to the feeling of the need for power. This need for power then leads to constructs of domination and exploitation in a patriarchal society, which can be seen in the form of racism, classism, heterosexism, and imperialism.[82]

Abuse of power is especially prevalent in the life of adults who were childhood victims and there has been no chance for recovery and healing. It has been said that predators can spot a victim a mile away. Consequently, leaders who are prone to abuse power can be considered predators of sorts when they find it easy to exploit the needs of survivors of abuse. In the church, patriarchy plays a major role in abuse of power. From the beginning of the early church until today, male privilege as patriarchy provides a means by which abuse of power can be justified in the mind of the abuser.

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[80]William S. Schmidt, "Power as Theological Problem," *The Journal of Pastoral Care* 46, no. 1, (Spring 1992): 71, accessed October 30,2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

[81]Ibid.

[82]Ibid.,72.

In addressing the abuse of power by King David with Bathsheba, Larry W. Spielman points out that when it comes to morality, everyone is vulnerable to falling into the trap of misconduct.[83] He notes that some blame David for looking and wanting, and others blame Bathsheba for bathing in his sight. In any event, what is clear is the ability of a leader and/or person in authority to rewrite the rules to make his abuse and misconduct seem right.

Marjorie Procter-Smith writes that women like children are usually dependent on adult males if the man is the head of household. She goes on to say that abuse of the patriarchy rule generally results in trauma in women and is the same as what is seen in children. Smith adds that in defining the word patriarchal it does not just refer to male rule of a female, but also relates to the allowance of domination based on age, class, race, and status, in addition to gender.[84]

Women who are victimized by abuse as children may have already had their ability to be spontaneous shattered which makes them more vulnerable to be exploited. Poling adds that the victim becomes entrapped in the threats of rejection and abuse and becomes locked in the conspiracy of silence and denial. These actions lock the victim in a secret prison.[85] Thus it is easy for a male who is seen as an authority figure by an abused woman to take advantage of her.

When abuse occurs within the church or the community, it is the assignment of the church to minister to the needs of the survivor and the perpetrator. It must be

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[83]Larry W Spielman, "David's Abuse of Power," *Word 7 World* 19, no. 3 (Summer 1999), accessed October 21, 2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost, 252.

[84]Marjorie Proctor-Smith, "Reorganizing Victimization: The Intersection between Liturgy and Domestic Violence," *Perkins Journal*, 40, no. 4 (October 1, 1987), accessed October 21, 2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost, 18.

[85]Ibid., 73.

understood that when dealing with the nature of man and sin, violence by men against women is a systemic issue.[86] The system works to support and encourage domestic violence and abuse by allowing the perpetrator to remain covered through encouraged silence of the victim. When there is a lack of confrontation by the clergy and leadership—especially when the perpetrator is also clergy or other church leadership, the absence of legal consequences are many times due to a lack of the church's support of the victim. There has also been denial and minimization of the abuse by the perpetrator in an attempt to avoid the consequences of their actions.[87] When in court women may be denied legal counsel if they cannot afford it while the man might have an attorney that will deny the abuse on the part of the man. Of late, in a letter to the editor of the Columbia, Tennessee Daily Herald, a victim reports that police reports are no longer accepted as evidence of domestic violence.[88]

Poling discusses the presence of God in every experience of the abused. He speaks mostly about sexual abuse and what he called other acts of human destructiveness such as slavery and the holocaust as examples of human suffering. These acts of violence are accepted when evil is in control of the world.[89] In agreement with this, Solomon wrote in Proverbs 29:2, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked man rules, the people groan and sigh" (AMP). Poling's belief is that

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[86]J. Denny Weaver, "Violence in Christian Theology," *Cross Currents* 51, no. 2: 150-176, accessed October 08, 2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

[87]James N Poling, "Hearing the Silenced Voices: The Work of Justice in Pastoral Theology," *Journal of Pastoral Theology*, accessed August 21, 2013, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost, 6.

[88]"Domestic Violence: Take Action Now to Break the Cycle," *Columbia Daily Herald*, May 16, 2013, accessed May 17, 2013, http://columbiadailyherald.com/sections/opinion/letters-editor/domestic-violence-take-action-now-break-cycle.html.

[89]Newton, 9.

when evil is in control at any level of responsibility, there is much suffering and it is impossible to focus on the goodness of God. Howard Thurman in *Jesus and the Disinherited* shared this view.[90] His idea is that it is extremely difficult to focus on the goodness of God when one examines the full ramifications of evil as in the kind of violence that is being examined, including sexual violence as domestic abuse.

In asking the question, "Where is the hope in a God of love and power when one has perpetrated evil," Poling focuses the question on the heart of the perpetrator.[91] How can he believe, and in many cases preach about a God of love when he, himself, is a vessel of evil. Yet, one cannot leave out the courage and resiliency of the human spirit when hope is alive. Poling states that the presence of hope in society makes it possible that even a nation that invented modern slavery and nuclear weapons can be changed by the power of God.[92]

Nancy Eileen Nienhuis, examines the question of suffering in *Theological Reflections on Violence and Abuse* from two viewpoints: one, that suffering is sent from God and requires obedience, and two, that unless the role of men and women remain in the hierarchical position of tradition, society will be in moral chaos.[93] Nienhuis states, her interest in examining this topic is to clarify it is not just the violated and the abuser that are affected. Violence is one of the few issues that may result in death or destruction of

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[90]Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996).

[91]Newton, 9.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Nancy E. Nienhuis, "Theological Reflections on Violence and Abuse," *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling* 59, nos. 1-2: (Spring-Summer 2005): 109, accessed October 16, 2013, ATLA Religion Database and ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

the biological family, and in some instances, the entire church. What makes this issue high priority for the church is that violence can happen anywhere.[94]

It is reported by the Department of Justice in Nienhuis' article "in the United States in 1998, women made up 75% of the victims of intimate murders and about 85 percent of the victims of non-lethal violence. Women are seven to fourteen times more likely than men to report physical assaults by an intimate partner. Domestic violence is still the leading reason that U. S. women visit emergency rooms. Domestic Violence against women occurs in 9% to 30% of heterosexual relationships. Of women who have been married 14% have been involved in rape or attempted raped by their husband or ex-husband. Women are more likely to be severely injured or killed when they try to leave an abusive relationship than at any other time."[95] These statistics show that violence against women was an epidemic in 1998 and there is the belief that these figures are still as great today.

Marie Fortune makes the point that because most men and women in the U. S. were raised in a religious home, they bring their beliefs from biblical teachings into the relationship with them. Consequently, many women believe that her husband has a right to access her sexually at his will because of her faith, and does not perceive that a non-consensual sexual relationship is rape.[96] Violence of the wife at the hands of her husband in the Christian home is not just a crisis of physical and emotional damage but spiritual as well. Her faith is so challenged that the violence alone throws her into a religious crisis;

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[94]Ibid.

[95]Ibid., 110.

[96]Ibid.

she questions her own faith in God that could lead to her abandoning herself as valuable or abandoning her faith in God to hold on to herself.

When turning to the church or other religious bodies, women stand the chance of being met with criticism, lack of sympathy, or a group of people that are not educated about the law in this matter and lack the skills to help.[97] Marie Fortune reports that she has found that the advice women get from the church is terrible; they are told to be better wives, to pray about the abuse, and give it over to God, to be more submissive, etc.[98]

In thinking about religion and violence and its relationship to theology, the following question arises: How can the church call a faithful Christian wife one who is self-sacrificing and obedient even in the face of abuse and violence? Nienhuis writes that if this is God's intention for order in the world, then the theological trajectory facilitates violence, even today.

Nienhuis shares the story of Abigail Abbott who wrote in her diary in 1767 about her faith as it relates to the abuse she endured from her husband. In her diary, she kept over a twenty-five year span of time, Abigail's husband Asa was physically abusive to Abigail, had affairs with the hired help, tried to rape one of the women who worked for them and sexually assaulted their sixteen year old daughter. Abigail wrote of how she tried to suppress the anguish by which her heart was tortured and broken. She felt that she should obey the voice of the Most High who she heard say," Be still and know that I am God." She wrote, "God knows best what I need, and what will be for his own glory."[99]

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[97]Ibid.

[98]Ibid.

[99]Ibid., 112.

Whether it was two hundred years ago or yesterday, the theology used to help women in the shoes of Abigail Abbott is the same: suffering. Most theologians teach that suffering is sent from God and it will all work out for good to those that love the Lord (Rom 8:28).

Though Abigail was able to leave Asa in 1792 and walk away from the terror and abuse, it was not her theology that freed her to leave.[100] We marvel at the staying power theology gives a woman who is being battered by her husband. If God is a God of love, and we as Christians must follow his Word, then to act in self-survival, would be to act out of the will of God, if we follow theological advice. If we follow God's intervention in the life of Hagar in the book of Genesis, or remember how God dealt with Phineas in the book of 1 Samuel for his moral sins toward his office as priest, his wife and his marriage, we can then know that there are many women in abusive relationships to please men's ideas of his power over the woman rather that the God of Power who relieves suffering and does not condone abuse.[101]

Delores Williams in *Sisters in the Wilderness* like Poling holds God to a standard that most Christians would not approach. Neither Williams nor Poling sees God as the liberator of suffering in his dealings with Hagar and Ishmael in the story of Abram and Sari's forcing her into surrogacy.[102] Nor do they see the church as a partner in liberation, but rather, allow the attitude of patriarchy in the church, allow abuse in relationships, and in the family. In fact, both Williams and Poling agree that God does seem rather

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[100]Ibid.

[101]For more on the story of Hagar and the abuse she suffered at the hands of Sari and rejection by Abram and God's intervention, see Genesis 16-17 and 21. Delores Williams also does an excellent job dealing with Hagar's abuse in *Sisters in the Wilderness*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 1 Samuel 2-4 speak to the liturgical and moral sins of the sons of Eli.

[102]Delores Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 16.

ambiguous in his attitude toward certain acts of patriarchy in many Old Testament readings and the church accepts this.[103]

It fits the purpose of this project to emphasize the use of the term "practical theology" by Poling in this book review article. Practical theology is a "theological interpretation of the unheard voices of personal and community life for the purpose of continual transformation of faith in the true God of love and power toward renewed ministry practice (187).[104] In trying to help the victim that is traumatized by abuse of any kind, pastoral theology must take a practical stance in order that the ministry of the church may restore the victim's voice. Schmidt writes of the phases of reflection that are necessary to lead the marginalized in an experience of transformation from victim to victor. He ends his review by saying, "A theology and a ministry which allows itself to be disturbed is a ministry of justice and empowerment."[105]

Proctor-Smith voices her opinion of why the liturgy on Sunday cannot be expected to serve as a balm for the wounded. The reason is that Christian liturgy can be used and is often used to "disguise and mystify domestic violence," making it seem acceptable in the Christian home.[106]

How does the church treat the abuser? How can the abused be given a voice that breaks the silence of their suffering and leads them down the path toward healing, recovery, and restoration? The Bible supports the idea that we are to hate the sin and love

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[103]Schmidt, 76.

[104]Schmidt, 77.

[105]Ibid.

[106]Ibid., 25.

the sinner. Proctor-Smith offers some other suggestions of how the Sunday liturgy can be redesigned to better speak to the subject of domestic violence and to the abused.

1. The liturgy can become more sensitive not to appear to condone domestic violence by use of Scripture or texts that reinforces the cycle of abuse.

2. Traditional marriage vows can be revised to leave out words or phrases that seems acceptable of patriarchal rule. This type of change was attempted by the Episcopal, Lutherans, United Methodists and Roman Catholics churches as far back as the mid to late 1980's, however, questions of the success of this change remains unanswered.[107]

3. The church with predominately male clergy and leaders can recognize that the majority of church attendees are women; consequently, the liturgy should grow from an awareness that woman's struggles and emotional needs are different from males. They should also recognize that women who have fought to survive with dignity intact through male dominance and abuse do not want the same thing for their daughters. [108]

4. The church is responsible to call the membership to actively oppose domestic violence rather than to allow the liturgy to make them passive observers.

5. Social sins like domestic and intimate partner violence must be recognized, confessed, and repented of rather than the negative behavior of domestic violence and other sexist sins "protected by silence." The offenses can no longer be seen as a "private matter between the man and woman, but must recognition must be given to the existence of the abuse and restitution granted after confession and repentance. When it comes to such sexist sins the whole church should be concerned that this is done.

6. The proclamation of God being a god of justice should be a highlighted part of the liturgical services. Acts of injustice whether in or out of the church must not go undiscussed.[109]

7. Victims of violence should have their own liturgies and services that recognize and applaud their survival through the struggle in the wilderness. Their journey to the well of healing, recovery, and restoration should be recognized when the silence is broken and the woman turns to the church for help. Such gatherings should be sanctioned by the church being careful to not

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[107]Ibid., 22.

[108]Proctor-Smith, 25.

[109]Ibid.

> marginalize the issue as one of women only, but to recognize that this population comprises the greatest number of those violated.[110]

In addition to providing the needed support of the church, Aidan Kavanaugh writes, "Liberators accomplish only half their task when they liberate. The other half of their labor is to provide a normal, free place, on which the liberation may land."[111] Women who have fought their way to freedom need medical, financial, legal, and psychological assistance. Those who have not yet found the courage to break free need to know there is a refuge, a safe place in the house of God. They also need to be given hope that healing, recovery, and restoration is possible.

In *Journey to the Well* by Bishop Vashti McKenzie, tells the story of a woman who went to the well in the scorching heat of the day breaking codes and cultures for water.[112] The search for water became an opportunity for the fulfillment of hope that she never imagined possible. This woman of the town of Samaria found hope in a man who not only told her all she had ever done, but understood why things happened as they had. Probably beaten, abused, left along, belittled, and without a husband, this woman would be no different from any victim of domestic violence, intimate partner abuse, or battering. As she suffered in silence, who would hear her silent cries? Bishop McKenzie tells of how the Samaritan woman met Jesus who represented the Church of today at that well where the water of the Spirit was offered as a thirst quencher, healer, and restorer.

What do these theologians say to women who know the pain of abuse, betrayal, and psychological and emotional violation of their souls? How can what has been said by

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[110]Ibid., 26.

[111]Aidan Kavanaugh, *On Liturgical Theology* (Yonkers, NY: Pueblo Press, 1984), 170.

[112]Vashti McKenzie, *Journey to the Well: 12 Lessons on Personal Transformation* (New York, NY: Penguin Putnam Inc., 2002), 23.

these scholars about who God is have an effect on the healing process of the wounded, including myself? In the ministry and model that should emerge from this journey, how can what is learned be used to offer hope to the hurting?

As Howard Thurman says, "It is hard to see the goodness of God when evil can be blamed for the suffering one is made to endure.[113] The advice of those who would advise the abused to, "just pray about it," "you've got to believe God," or the quoting of scriptures like, "All things work together for good…"[114] are words that serve to justify the abuse and minimize the suffering of the abuser. These words also put the victim on an emotional rollercoaster of guilt and shame for having broken their silence. Many women grew up during the era when, in the South was a code that said—"Keep your mouth shut." The writer's grandparents believed that, "Kids should be seen and not heard," and "What goes on in our house stays here." Terry Loving writes, "If you broke the code, no matter how much you were suffering, you paid a price. The family code kept the children mute—the beatings kept the women silenced."[115] Yet, many women have already discovered that God was not coming to save them, BUT he would send Reverend This and Brother That, or even Sister So-and-So if they would but hear Him!

There are women who speak about the absence of the Black church in America during their years of being victimized by violence and abuse. One woman did not find the Lord to be her Shepard, as written in Psalms 23. Stories are told of Black mothers who sat in the pew on Sunday morning looking for hope and help in her time of need only to

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[113]Howard Thurman, " My Favorite Quotes," SystemThinker.com, accessed December 5, 2013, http://www.systemsthinker.com/quotes/.

[114]Rom 8:28.

[115]Terry Loving, "Black Women, and Domestic Violence, Spiritual Side of Domestic Violence," accessed December 3, 2013, http://ssofdv.wordpress.com/2011/12/13/black-women-and-domestic-violence/.

be made to endure spiritual abuse from the church. When trying to report abuse to the pastor, he might put the Lord in his quotes about how she should suffer in silence. Keri Day, in her book *Unfinished Business*, addresses the struggle of the Black woman to thrive in America and encourages the church to take its place in the fight.[116] One way the church can do this is by acknowledging from the pulpit that violence in the home is not a choice of the abused, and that it is a sin before God for one partner to abuse another. The church must also lead in confronting the issues within our society that fuel anger and discontent such as racism, sexism, and justice that cause Black women to be marginalized.[117]

Delores Williams and James Poling are joined in their challenge to the church to become part of the liberation plan of God in the lives of women. As we look back through the scripture, God used men like Moses, Joseph, David, Gideon, and others as vehicles of liberation for an entire nation of people. Once he used a prophetess named Deborah, and in the 20th Century he used Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamer[118] and Dorothy

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[116]Keri Day, *Unfinished Business Black Women, the Black Church, and the Struggle to Thrive in America* (New York, NY: Orbis Books, 2012), 10.

[117]Ibid., 94.

[118]Fannie Lou Hamer "dedicated her life to the fight for civil rights, working for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. This organization was comprised mostly of African-American students who engaged in acts of civil disobedience to fight racial segregation and injustice in the South. These acts often were met with violent responses by angry whites. During the course of her activist career, Hamer was threatened, arrested, beaten, and shot at. She was severely injured in 1963 in a Winona, Mississippi jail. She and two other activists were taken in by police after attending a training workshop. Hamer was beaten so badly that she suffered permanent kidney damage." Fannie Lou Hamer, Biography Civil Rights Activist, accessed December 3, 2013, www.ettc.net/tah/lesson Plans/papers/Appendices EH.pdf.

Height.[119] The appeal to the church is to take part in the activities necessary to become a vehicle of transformation in the lives of women who are enslaved by the cruelty of abuse.

It is important for Black women to understand that when they cannot find the support they need, there are other sources, and they must not stop until they find the help they need. One can never tell if the next door might not lead to an answered prayer. It is my hope that the church and its leaders will become trailblazers in eradicating violence and abuse from the pews and the community. A woman should be free to talk about the subject of violence and abuse with her pastor or any member of the church. It is my belief that lay members should be trained in recognizing and addressing the issue of abuse and violence, both in the church and in the community. Sundays should be dedicated to the subject of abuse and violence as it pertains to men and women. The pastor should not avoid the portions of scripture that deal with domestic and family abuse. This subject should have a place among those of deliverance and the miracles of Jesus. Domestic Violence Awareness Month should be just as important to the church as Black History Month.

The church must become the vehicle of healing and restoration that Jesus left it to be; leading women to that place of transformation from ashes to beauty.

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[119]Dorothy Height (1912-2010) worked for many years for the YWCA and for the National Council of Negro Women for over 50 years. Ms. Height have many quotes cited in history, however one that rings true for the black woman is, "As I reflect on the hope and challenges facing women in the 21st century, I am also reminded of the protracted struggles of African-American women who joined together as SISTERS in 1935 in response to Mrs. Bethune's (Mary McLeod Bethune) call. It was an opportunity to deal creatively with the fact that Black women stood outside of America's mainstream of opportunity, influence and power." About.com, Women's History, accessed December 3, 2013, http://womens history.about. com/od/quotes/a/Dorothy_height.htm?p=1.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

This project seeks to raise awareness and provide support in the development of a ministry to victim/survivors of domestic abuse and intimate partner terrorism. The end results will be a training manual for churches and clergy to use as a model for progressive growth in this field. Through use of the training, it is desired that women will regain their voice and the courage to reach out for help from the church and its membership. This project seeks to help the victim/survivors strengthen or develop their intimacy with God and instruct the church in the value of ministering to the spiritual need of this population of people in the church and in the community. The Grace United Missionary Baptist Church membership, the community, and women around this nation, through telephone conference calls were able to benefit from the content of this design.

Although education and experienced, I have a strong understanding of the challenges domestic violence brings to a woman's life, especially when that woman endeavors to live close to God. This understanding opens this Doctor of Ministry project to become a vehicle of optimism and hope. It is important to show a woman that she can break the silence of domestic abuse and remain a valuable part of society. It is important that the church is able to display an assured acceptance and support of that woman as she emerges, as the woman at the well, out of a life that has been plagued with disappointment, rejection, isolation, and silence. Restoration follows healing and

recovery, hence, the church is more than a place of encouragement but also a place of empowerment to move forward toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

The methodology that supports this project is based on a six-week Hour of Empowerment for victims and survivors of domestic abuse, a Community Awareness Day on Domestic Violence and random surveys taken from students and pastors on their awareness and response to victims of domestic violence within their congregation and community. Prior to the beginning of the project, a pre test was administered to each participant to capture their feelings and knowledge regarding abuse and its systemic affects. During the initial gathering, participants signed consent forms granting them admission to the project and process of healing. A posttest was administered at the conclusion of the six weeks to measure changes in attitude and desire for intimacy with God in spite of the abuse.

Women's Experience with Battering

A precursor to the official beginning of the Hour of Empowerment was the administering of the WEB survey. This questionnaire served to allow for the collection of in-depth qualitative data to examine attitudes and understanding of domestic violence and was administered to all participants. The WEB gathered data on the awareness of the women of their situation, how attuned they were to their feelings in this place, are they quiet about the abuse or has the silence been broken, etc.

The survey was supplemented with a personal interview that ask each lady to give more details of their experiences and feelings about living with abuse and the value and extent of church support during their struggle. The researcher took careful notes of the

responses of the ladies. Taped recordings were avoided to allow the participants to feel freer to be open about their answers.

The participants were asked to complete an Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments (ASPIRES) to gauge how the abuse has affected their faith and intimacy with God (Appendix B).[1] It was desired to understand if the ladies continued to pray after God did not come right away. What was it like for them to hear the historical comments such as, "you must have faith," and "you should keep silent about the abuse and not talk outside the home." At the end of the Bible study the ASPIRES Assessment was administered as a post-test to determine the amount of healing and empowerment that has taken place through the Bible study, sermons and other activities.

Church/Community Involvement was offered as a Domestic Violence Awareness Day held in Columbia, Tennessee. The activities of this day were designed to involve the leadership and members of the Grace United Baptist Church family who served as the host. Local Domestic Violence organizations and other persons from the community were asked to participate. Handouts, brochures, etc. were provided as education for the community. Additional churches were invited to participate as information and an opportunity for training were offered to church leadership via a flyer and personal letter that was addressed to the congregation through the pastor.

Measures

A six-week Bible study was comprised of the focus group of women who were invited from the church, the community, and other areas. The ASPIRES Assessment was

[1]Paige Hall Smith, *Women's Experience with Battering Scale* (Greensboro, NC: University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2001).

administered to help the leader determine the spiritual impact of the abuse on the group.[2] The Women's Experience with Battering (WEB) Scale was also administered to provide the leader with a valid and concise measure for women in abusive relationships.[3] This information was used to select scripture to deconstruct the negative teaching of how women should accept abuse as normal.

The *Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments* (ASPIRES) scale (Piedmont, 2004a) was developed explicitly to identify those fundamental and motivational aspects of spirituality that is the foundation of all religious traditions. "The ASPIRES Assessment provides very specific operationalization's for the constructs of religiosity and spirituality. The former is defined as a sentiment, an emotional tendency that develops out of social traditions and educational experiences. Thus, the extent to which one is involved in the rituals and practices associated with a particular faith tradition is a function of what has been learned and valued in a social context. The ASPIRES Assessment has two scales that capture these religious sentiments: *Religious Involvement,* an eight-item measure that queries the extent to which an individual is involved in ritual practices and feels that these values are important in his or her life; and *Religious Crisis,* a four-item scale that measures the extent to which someone feels they are isolated from the God of their understanding and their religious community." This assessment was the major focus for data collection and examination.

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[2]R. Piedmont, M. B. Werdel and Mario Fernando, "The Utility of Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments (ASPIRES) Scale with Christians and Buddhists in Sri Lanka," *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion*, 20, 4, accessed December 9, http://ro.uow.edu.au/commpapers/570.

[3]P. H. Smith, J. A. Earp and R. DeVellis, "Measuring Battering: Development of the Women's Experience with Battering (WEB) Scale, Abstract," *Women's Health*, vol. 1 no. 4 (Winter 1995): 273-88.

Phase Two of the Modelling Process will be completed at a later time. Part I was a women's conference entitled, "Woman You Are Worth It" (WOW). Part two; an educational component of this Phase will be to train Pastors and Laity.

This WOW conference was designed to validate the worth of women who have recently left and survived domestic abuse. The retreat was held in a state park for women to feel a sense of safe sanctuary. Various theologians who are survivors or supporters of survivors of domestic violence were featured. Biblical precepts were used to present God as healer to include storytelling of the scriptures. Local pastors and laity were asked to participate as an avenue of acceptance to reach out to those who have been victimized by this trauma.

A workshop for pastors and laity included: 1) Speak Out - a DVD on how other Church programs address domestic violence; 2) Increase the Church's Understanding of the damage done to the Mental Health of the victim and the resources to address this need; and 3) Thinking About the Trauma of Domestic Violence.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

The Project

The empirical phenomenology approach was used to prove that if the church accepts the challenge to provide spiritual and personal support to victims of domestic abuse, then the victims will share their suffering with the church thus breaking the silence. Offering Bible studies or support groups to all victim/survivors whether they are members of the congregation or residents in the community can show this concern. The object is to destroy the "Holy Hush" that is present in the church about the magnitude of the existence of domestic violence in our midst.[1] Interviews, observation, a survey, and a questionnaire were used to collect life-experiences for the purpose of analysis. The focus group was asked to provide their personal input by completing the survey, questionnaire as a pre-test and post-test and evaluation at the end of the experience. The evaluation was used to assess how well the researcher had served to represent the church in this support group model for ministry.

The project context is a small community in southern Middle Tennessee that has the highest number of cases of domestic violence than any town in the state of Tennessee. The town is one-tenth the size of Memphis. The lawyer that was also the Director of the local Domestic Violence Center/Shelter reported to the newspaper that the court system,

[1]Holy Hush is a term used in many reports and research projects by Dr. Nancy Nason-Clark, Director of the Department of Social Work at the University of New Brunswick, Canada. It depicts the sacred cow that talking about domestic violence is in the church.

the prosecutor's office, and the police departments are the reason that these numbers are so high. There is such ambiguity of the process and challenge given to those seeking relief from domestic abuse. The challenges for the victim are many. She may find that there is an absence of legal assistance, which leads to lack of access to the judicial system; she may experience further victimization by the police department who may not believe the victim. Her health and emotional issues go unattended when the victim is hesitant to reveal the real cause of the fall, the bruises or sometimes, the broken bone.

Data Collection and Methods

Hour of Empowerment

The first activity was an Hour of Empowerment, a six-week Bible-Study/Group Support. This hour was designed to help female victims of domestic abuse believe that the church does have an interest in helping them heal, recover and be restored from the effects of domestic violence. The Study was held from June 9 to July 21, 2014. A total of six participants that lived in five states attended the weekly conference call. The presentation of lessons and activities for this Hour of Empowerment was based on information gleaned from one surveys, two questionnaires as the pre and post-test assessment, and personal interviews.

Participants

The total participants were five. Seven started, and two dropped out early in the process. An eighth participant came in about one-third the way through. The interviews began unconstructed, however, certain questions were asked of each lady to have some comparative data for writing this field experience.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Project Participants

Race	
African American	80%
White	20%
Education Level	
HS graduate or some college	20%
College graduate	40%
Current employment status	
Unemployed/Retired	60%
Student	20%
Employed	20%
Current marital status	
Single	40%
Divorced or separated	20%
Widowed	0
Married	40%
Physical IPV in past relationship	
Yes	40%
No	60%

All of the ladies are Christians and all are over fifty years of age. The mean age is fifty-seven the median is fifty-five, there is no mode and the range is thirteen. Each participant had some exposure to domestic violence as will be discussed in more detail below.

Participant #1 is a sixty-four-year old woman who is married and a Bible school graduate. She is active in her church where the patriarchal rule is at work and most of the membership is men. There are no women, to her knowledge, that have reported abuse in her church. She is experiencing criminal covert stalking and abuse from someone other than her husband.

Participant #2 is a fifty-four year old mother of one child who has never been married. She had lost both parents by her late teens that left her in a vulnerable position. She is a Bible school graduate and currently not active in a church. Her lack of church

affiliation is contributed to the covert harassment and abuse she experiences as domestic violence.

Participant #3 is a fifty-five year old mother and grandmother who is currently separated from her husband who has been a church pastor. She has been married for over twenty-five years and has experienced many years of battering but never physical abuse. She has been separated from her spouse more than once during their marriage. She is not currently committed to a church though she has been attending periodically.

Participant #4 is fifty-one years old, the mother of one child and has never been married. She grew up in one denomination while living in the home with her parents. As a young adult, she changed to a different denomination that was much stricter in the way women carried himself or herself, dress especially. Along the way she became discouraged by the subtle power of spiritual abuse and today is not attending a church at all. She is currently dealing with a sometimes-volatile situation with her adult child.

Participant #5 is a sixty-four year old woman who is married with no children. Raised by her parents, she was exposed to some abuse as a child but not in her marriage since being an adult. She grew up in a strict religious family and stayed with the church until covert harassment and abuse began to invade her life. She felt the people in the church did not understand nor want to understand her suffering and this led to her leaving organized religion.

Women's Experience with Battering Scale (WEB)

The Focus Group was asked to complete a survey called the (WEB) as a precursor to the beginning of the study. This survey was developed as part of a research grant and is now public domain access (Appendix A).[2] It consisted of ten questions and is designed to show how much abuse the participant has been exposed to in her lifetime and how the interventions have impacted her resilience. It also helps the researcher determine how the woman interprets these experiences. The WEB has been found to have good construct validity, it allows for the accurate distinction of battered from non-battered women and has proven to provide reliable data in its consistent scores.[3]

In the WEB scale, a score higher than sixty means greater psychological vulnerability meaning they are more battered. A score of nineteen or less indicates that the woman is not battered. Based on the totals from each woman's responses, all of them show psychological vulnerability from the effects of being battered. In the graph below, 40% of the respondents show extreme susceptibility to the psychological effects of battering. Only one person's score was slightly above the eighteen points that is considered not battered. Of significance is this person is the youngest in the group. Of the ladies being victimized by covert harassment, it was discovered that 60% can be

[2]Paige Hall Smith, *Women's Experience with Battering Scale* (Durham, NC: University of North Carolina, Greensboro, 2001).

[3]Paige Hall Smith, Irene Tessaro, and Jo Anne L. Earp, "Women's Experiences with Battering: A Conceptualization from Qualitative Research," *Women's Health Issues*, 5:197-182.

accomplished by cyber or covert means.[4] Of those women feeling ashamed, 80% was based on what had been done to them. This shame has prevented them from seeking support from the church or outside agencies. It is important to note that 60% of the respondents experience covert battering from persons with whom they have never been personally involved. Each of these ladies reported feeling like a prisoner due to their inability to name their perpetrator yet they receive abuse via cyber means as stalking.

In answering the questions on the scale, concerns of feeling safe in their own home showed up most often as presented in questions 1, 3, 6, and 10 (Appendix A). Of the women responding, 60% answered positively that they hide the truth of the abuse from others due to fear.

Aspires

The Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments (ASPIRES) was used as a pre-test and given again at the end as a post-test. Dr. Ralph Piedmont, Professor of Pastoral Counseling at Loyola University in Maryland, developed this thirty-five-item assessment. The assessment is divided into two parts; Religious Sentiments and Spiritual Transcendence. Religious Sentiments is comprised of two measures; Religious Involvement, which reflects how involved someone is in religious activities of ones' faith community, and Religious Crisis, which determines if a person is experiencing challenges with their faith in God. In the field of social sciences, sentiments, which can be powerful motivators of behavior, are defined as "emotional tendencies that develop

[4]Dennis Kucinich, *Space Preservation Act of 2001*, Introduced in the House of Representatives, October 2, 2001. H.R.2977. When asked about the bill by representatives of the Institute for Cooperation in Space, Mr. Kucinich replied, "My bill will call for an immediate and permanent termination of research, testing, manufacturing, production and deployment of all space-based weapons systems and components by any person, agency or contractor of the U.S. government," accessed December 19, 2014, http://www.spaceref.com/news/viewpr.html?pid=5985.

out of social traditions and educational experiences."[5] Understanding ones sentiments helps to understand what drives a person to be bound by the beliefs and restraints of traditional faith ideals in their familiar social setting. The three major areas evaluated in the Spiritual Transcendence section are prayer fulfillment, connectedness, and universality. Prayer fulfillment measures how satisfied a person is with their prayer life and spiritual growth that brings connection to God. Connectedness evaluates feelings of belonging and gauges the idea of responsibility to contribute to the big picture of why we were created. This bond joins generations and cultures together. The idea of connectedness in a domestic violence situation could appear to be co-dependent behavior, which holds the victim in the relationship due to tradition. Then, connectedness becomes an enabler. Universality takes a closer look at the belief that life has a higher meaning and purpose.[6]

An Assessment to gauge was used to track the effects that abuse and lack of support from the church had on a woman's relationship with God. The questions answered by the assessment were: did she continue to pray, did she remain hopeful that God would answer, etc.? Recognizing that the church is God's representative of God in the earth, where were they during the victim's suffering? One participant has stopped attending church as a result of her experiences. She grew up in a strict denomination. After becoming discouraged with the church she has not attended church or church activities in over ten years. A second participant was a pastor's wife who was verbal/emotional abusive. Her church attendance diminished significantly after her

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[5]Ralph, M Piedmont,. Christine Kennedy, Martin F. Sherman, Nancy C. Sherman, and Joseph E.G. Williams, "A Psychometric Evaluation of the Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments (ASPIRES) Scale: Short Form," *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 19, (2008): 165.

[6]Piedmont, *The ASPIRES in Sri Lanka*, 5.

separation from her husband who was a verbal/emotional abuser. A desired outcome of this focus group is to see both ladies re-established in fellowship with the church at the same if not a better position of trust as the Holy Hush is shattered and the church listens.

Brown, Chen, Gehlert, and Piedmont report that there are empirical and theoretical models that show logical spiritual and religious changes due to the level of maturity during an individual's life span.[7] Piedmont and others have tested the validity of the ASPIRES in several different groups and cultures with consistent psychosocial and religious outcomes. For this project, the pre-test and post-test results are shown in the table below (Table 2). The validity of the ASPIRES was verified for standardized and cross-cultural measures by Piedmont, 1999, 2004, 2005, 2007; Piedmont et.al., 2009; Piedmont & Leach, 2002; and Rican & Janosova, 2010.[8]

Pre-test and post-test data was collected from each participant of the conference call Focus Group. The results shown in Table 2 are pre-test totals on the left and post-test scores on the right in each column. The measures are reported by age to show the responses per age group. Though all participants are considered Baby Boomers (1946-1964), it must be noted that the generation before them, the Silent Generation (1925-1945) were even more entrenched in the traditional manipulation of a "code of silence" than the Baby Busters (1965-1980) who were born during the era of rebellion to the

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[7]I. Tucker Brown, Tiznzhi Chen, Nathan C. Gehlert and Ralph L. Piedmont, "Age and Gender Effects on the Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments (ASPIRES) Scale: A Cross-Sectional Analysis," accessed 8-22-2014, *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, American Psychological Association,* 2012, Advance online publication, DOI: 10.1037/a0030137.

[8]Ibid., 2.

system and the status quo.[9] The Silent Generation was born during the end of WWII and the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. They had the residue from the days of slavery and still endured colored public facilities, which separated them from those who enjoyed white and male privilege. Silence in many ways protected the entire community from Jim Crow, lynching's, and Klan burnings. The Baby Boomers, on the other hand, end of the Civil Rights Movement and during an era with the highest divorce rate and second highest number of marriages in history.[10]

In Table 2 below, the responses are shown in three categories and one column reflects the combined totals for Spiritual Transcendence pre-test (shown on the left of each column) and post-test (shown on the right of each column) statistics. Column 1 shows the age range of the participants. There was one in the fifty and under age range, and two persons in the other two age ranges.

Section I of the ASPIRES assessment identifies the religious involvement and religious status of each participant. The appraisal of religious status determines if either of the ladies was in a crisis or not based on their score. A mixture of measures was used to rate the answers of the respondents. Questions 1-3 had seven possible answers from Never to Several Times per Week. Questions 4-6 offered five options from Never to Very Strong or Quite Often. Extremely Important to Not at All Important were the possible answers for question 7, and question 8 simply asked if their religious interests and involvements had increased or decreased based on a scale from 1 to 7. The questions related to Religious Involvement revealed that 80% of the participants are regular Bible readers and spend consistent time in prayer. Those who felt they have a personal, unique,

[9]"Generational Differences Chart," accessed 1-12-2015, http://wmfc.org.

[10]Ibid.

and close relationship with God was 60%. Those showing a sign of being in a religious crisis by saying they feel that God is punishing them, and have therefore abandoned them were 20%. Further investigation into the background of the respondent reveals a stricter religious involvement in her young adult years that today would be said to border on spiritual abuse. The researcher finds it important to note that in answer to question 1, "I feel abandoned by God," the percentage moved from 20% in the pre-test to 40% in the post-test. Steps were taken to work more closely with that person to identify areas that support her questions of self-worth and dismantle its power in her life.

Section II, which is divided into three sections is presented in Table 2 below. Participants are asked to rate themselves between Strongly Agree with a numerical value of 5 and Strongly Disagree, which values 1 point. A chart was designed to put all the values side by side for ease of analysis.

The questions related to Prayer Fulfillment are 1,4,8,11,12,17,18,19 and 21. For purpose of discussion, the researcher will look at the responses of questions 1, 4, and 8. These three questions relate to how fulfilling prayer and meditation is to the participant and if they feel a sense of wholeness during their time of prayer. The pre-test statistics show that 20% of the group experienced an increase in prayer fulfillment while the other 80% showed a slight decrease. At least one person was being thrust into a crisis due to other involvements and negative reactions that were beyond her control.

Column three shows the pre-test and post-test statistics on connectedness and includes questions 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 14, 20, 22, and 23. Like the section on Prayer Fulfillment, Connectedness contains nine (9) questions. The third section, Universality, contains five (9) questions and will not be discussed for evaluation purposes.

Connectedness is the next most important set of scores because they help the researcher discern the level of belonging to a larger human population and ones feelings of responsibility to humanity as a whole in spite of generation or culture.[11] At the end of the six-weeks, all participants reported that they felt more connected to God and to humanity. Careful observation must be maintained to ensure there are no co-dependent behaviors showing up. The idea is to belong and share not to become totally responsible. In an intimate relationship between two partners, it is very easy to put the relationship with the partner before the relationship with God. At this time, an imbalance takes place and the victim might lose her power.

Table 2. ASPIRES Scale Pre-Test and Post-Test Comparison

Age	Total STS	Prayer Fulfillment Items 1, 4, 8	Universality Items 3,6, 13	Connected-ness Items 2, 5, 7
Up to age 50	21-26	9-11	6-6	6-9
Ages 51 - 59	40-38	19-17	13-14	13-14
Ages 60 and up	54-52	18-17	19-20	17-15

Focus Group Conference Call

The focus group sessions were not taped; however, the researcher took notes of the content of each meeting. Due to the nature of the group, it was important to maintain the feelings of privacy and confidentiality in the group. Groups lasted approximately sixty to ninety minutes each.

[11]Piedmont, *The ASPIRES in Sri Lanka,* 7.

The notes of each focus group session were transcribed and the text was analyzed to discover patterns emerged from the responses to various questions that were asked during the meetings. Each session was opened with prayer and each participant was asked to check-in with events in their life, concerns, and items for prayer.

One visitor joined us as a special guest half way through the sessions and remained with us the other rest of the time that the study was being conducted. This guest was a mother of the church who shared her victory over the darkness of domestic violence. Her talk was scriptural in the words she used to encourage the ladies that they, too, can find themselves having forgiven their perpetrator and living the life of an overcomer.

Session 1 – June 9, 2014

During this session each participant was asked to introduce himself or herself and tell a little about their lives and their experiences with domestic violence. After each person spoke, the Leader gave an overview of the next sessions and introduced the Power and Control Wheel as presented of Women Created in the Image of God and in a Patriarchal Society.[12] The material had been emailed to the participants and we discussed the power of power and control in both a patriarchal society where the woman is not valued by the male to how we should be treated as women who are created in the image of God.

Personal boundaries were our second topic for discussion, which is an issue for women who have been violated by battering and by being in a patriarchal society without

[12]Jeri Gray-Reneberg, "Domestic Violence: Focus Guide for Clergy and Religious Leaders," accessed June 2, 2014, Family Violence Council of Lincoln/Lancaster County and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, 1996.

being battered. According to Merriam Webster, the definition for boundaries have three meanings: 1) something (such as a river, a fence, or an imaginary line) that shows where an area ends and another area begins; 2) a point or limit that indicates where two things become different boundaries; 3) unofficial rules about what should not be done; and 4) limits that define acceptable behavior.[13]

The third discussion with the group was about the Holy Hush or Shattered Silence in the church. The Leader asked the question, "Who talks to their Pastor about their issues with domestic violence and abuse? One response was, "My pastor knows about what I deal with and conflicting information from outside sources challenges his belief." Another answered, "Clergy does not weigh many things by the spirit."

Session 2 – June 23, 2014

Session 2 was not held on June 16th due to conflicts in the schedules of the participants. Prior to the meeting, an email was sent containing the topic for discussion. The topics were praying for guidance and how God view and speaks about domestic violence in the bible. Tasha Cobbs also sent a link to the ladies referring them to a YouTube video of Break Every Chain.

At the beginning of the session there was prayer followed by a check-in where each participant told how their week had ended last week. One participant reported about her frustrations and another suggested scripture that she could stand on (Ps 46:10).

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[13]Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, accessed December 22, 2014, http://www.merriam-webster.com /dictionary/boundary.

Scriptures discussed were: Psalms 17:8-9, Psalms 91:4, Isaiah 54:17, 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 and I John 1:9.[14]

Psalm 17:8-9 (NASB)

Keep me as the apple of the eye. Hide me in the shadow of Your wings
From the wicked who despoil me, my deadly enemies who surround me.

Psalm 91:4 (NASB)

He will cover you with His pinions, And under His wings you may seek refuge;
His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark.

Isaiah 54:17 (NASB)

No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their vindication is from Me," declares the LORD.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 (NASB)

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. [1] No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

1 John 1:9 (NASB)

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Session 3 – June 30, 2014

Session 3 was opened with prayer and Check-In's from each participant. Each of the ladies made remarks about the week and voiced any concerns.

The Leader shared a statement that she had heard over the weekend regarding survivors of domestic violence. The statement was, "We are masters at forgiveness, and yet we never become overcomers." Definitions were shared of what it means to be a

[14]All scripture in these sessions are read from the *New American Standard Bible.*

victim, target, survivor, and an overcomer. Bible verses about overcoming were also shared and discussed. (Rom 10:9-11, Rev 12:11, Jn 16:33, Rom 12:21 and 1 Jn 4:4.) Examination of the statement on overcoming led to the first second, Dance of Anger.[15]

In his book, *Dance of Anger*, the author tells of how we dance with anger with the person we are having conflict with. A much written quote about Dr. Lerner is "Anger is a signal and one worth listening to."[16] She seeks to show women how anger can be used to transform their lives rather than to allow anger to keep them locked in silence or respond in a destructive way. Our partner says something hurtful, we say something hurtful, and these damaging words go back and forth in a dance type fashion. When asked how they deal with the invitation to dance with anger, one lady replied that she remembers the scripture, Isaiah 26:3, "He will keep me in perfect peace-saying she listens to the Spirit of God-quickly agrees and acknowledges the other side's opinion." She stated that it is her belief that, empowerment comes when you yield to peace. Another participant reminded the group that God teaches that a soft answer turns away wrath. She shared of learning to ask gentle questions that diffuses the bomb and requires the other party to think. She found in her reaction to the invitation to dance that soft words change the atmosphere.

The last topic for the evening was on Emotional Intelligence. In his book, *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goldman, he refers to EI as the capacity to recognize our own emotions and those of others the ability to motivate ourselves and the knowledge of how to manage the emotions within and in relationships with others.[17] The therapist

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[15]Harriett Lerner, *The Dance With Anger: A Woman's Guide to Changing the Patterns in Intimate Relationships* (New York, NY: Harper Collins Books, 1995).

[16]Ibid.

[17]Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than an IQ* (New York, NY: Bantam Dell, 1994).

shared with the group the words of a former therapist, "They can pack the bags but cannot make you take the trip." She encouraged the group to remember these words in times of conflict when emotional blackmail becomes part of the weapons used against us.

Session 4 – July 7, 2014

A special guest was with the Group tonight. A Mother of the church came on the conference call to share with us how God brought her through a difficult situation to the place of forgiveness and overcoming.

Our visitor shared scriptures from Revelations 12:11, Romans 10:17, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Nehemiah 8:10c, Romans 8:35-39, 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, Hebrews 11:6, Psalms 63, Job: 1 and the questions, " Have you been considered."

Our guest shared about her years in a domestic violence situation and how she came out of the situation, God walked her to forgiveness, and then into a place of overcoming the abuse she had endured. Key points shared by this special lady were:

- Did not tell her family of the abuse she was enduring.
- She was existing but not really living, she was harassed and threatened.
- She shared that children are affected because of the environment they live in.
- There is no lingering animosity towards the perpetrator once she was out of the relationship.
- She has since survived and overcame the relationship.
- She overcame it and the past no longer affects her.
- She came to realize that hurt people, hurt people.
- She forgave the abuser and could now minister to the needs of that person.
- True forgiveness means you want your captor to be free as you are free.

- Forgiveness does not mean you don't remember-when you see the perpetrator the anger and bad memories don't shake you. We have to release to be free of hatred and unforgiveness. We must allow God to help us release it.
- Forgiveness-You make the decision, once you make the decision you pray and ask God and he does the rest.
- You surrender your will then the feelings come along side later but God starts working on the inside.
- We sometimes get Weary in the waiting—we must stay in touch with God through the word, prayer—we have to ask God for the strength.
- The Joy of the Lord is our strength.
- Don't Stop-Keep Fighting. We must turn it over to God but don't give up.
- There is a place that singing plays in the strength. Words in the songs have been found to gives you strength. The guest shared that how she came to know the song Strongman. She told the group that when preaching does not get it, praise does.
- We were reminded that what we see is temporary, what we don't see is eternal.

Session 5 – July 14, 2014

This session was opened with prayer led by the Leader. Each participant checked-in and voiced any concerns. The topic for discussion was the Stained Glass Window a concept borrowed from RAVE, introduced earlier in the field experience, and the power of colors in our lives.[18] It was stated that our lives, when shattered by violence, broken promises and broken dreams, look like a stained glass window. The frame starts out with nothing in it, just the separators of the glass are in place. Each piece of the glass is stained in a color that is significant to the picture. Just like a stained glass window, the colors what we choose to give us comfort and encouragement are ones that we will find most

[18]"The Significance of the Stained Glass," The RAVE Project, accessed 11/15/2014, http://www.theraveproject.com/index.php/rave/our-symbols/.

often in our clothes and in our homes. These same colors would be found in the pieces of a stained glass window as our lives are restored to wholeness.

The colors of a color wheel were shared with the ladies and the support that color gives to the physical body, the emotions and how they help us to succeed in life. Each lady was asked to share about her favorite color and why.

One example of the activities during the Hour of Empowerment was a stained glass window used to illustrate the fragmentation that abuse causes. This activity was adapted from The RAVE Project as designed by Dr. Nancy Nason-Clarke, Director, School of Social Work, University of New Brunswick.[19] The ladies were encouraged to select a stained glass window and after discussing the value of color as therapy, asked to obtain a stained glass picture that had purpose for them and color or paint it in colors that had meaning to them. The lesson was taught of the chaos that domestic violence causes in the home and life of the victim(s). The aftermath looks like a stained glass window in that there are shattered pieces of the life that must be put back together as healing takes place. While rebuilding a broken life, colors that encourage, inspire, and motivate one to wholeness are put together in the stained glass picture. The end result is a beautiful piece of art that is not without scars, but stands out in the life of the survivor as a place where God was present and proof that restoration is possible.

[19]Ibid.

Session 6 – July 21, 2014

This session was opened with prayer led by the Leader. Each participant checked-in and voiced any concerns. The focus of tonight's meeting is for each lady to share what picture they used for their stained glass window, what colors they used and why. The leader summarized last weeks' discussion of colors in the rainbow as used by God in Genesis 9:13 and their significance to the body and to healing. Then attention was turned to the significance to the colors used in a stained glass window as usually found in a church or chapel.

Participant #1 chose an irregular shaped stained glass. She explained that large pieces were done in primary colors. The significance of the window represented what she wants for her life and what she wants to include in her life. She reported that she really enjoyed this exercise and found it to be very therapeutic. The spiritual message of this stained glass was thoughts of oneness with God. The color purple was her main color. Other colors used were blue, pink, orange, green, yellow, aqua blue, yellow orange, and peach-magenta.

Participant #2 chose a triangle within a circle with shapes inside and outside which represented the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The different shapes in her window represented the past and history. Her primary color was yellow which represents hope and a bright future. The star/cross and top of the triangle reminds her that Jesus died for her sins and salvation. The cross-reminded her of her life and dying to self. Jeremiah 29:11 came to her mind as she worked on this project. She went on to explain that inside the triangle is most meaningful and that part was painted yellow. Other colors used were

yellow, black, indigo blue. Yellow was used for stars, black outlined the triangle and indigo blue was used to color the shapes.

The leader encouraged the ladies to pamper themselves as a way of continuing to heal from the abuses of the past. The ladies were told to not be afraid to love and accept themselves completely. A little discussion followed on the contents of the book written by Bishop T.D. Jakes, "The Lady, Her Lover and Her Lord."

Community Awareness of Domestic Violence Day

The second activity was a Community Awareness of Domestic Violence Day that was held in Columbia, Tennessee. This was an outreach activity in which the community was invited to attend this information session. The day was planned to have video introduction to the topic, a panel of individuals from the community that would share their experiences with domestic violence and a video presentation from some pastors on how they approach the topic in their churches. The highlight of this day was when my pastor, a member of the panel, shared his experience of being a child victim of domestic violence as he witnessed his mother's courage and triumph to leave the situation. Participants were given a DVD that was supplied by the Institute against Domestic Violence in the African American Community as well as a packet of information to read and share with others.

The attendance was a lot less than anticipated; however in light of that, phone calls were placed to pastors and clergy members soliciting their participation to answer survey questions. Those who participated in the phone survey received a packet that was handed out at the Awareness Day.

A Survey of Clergy on Domestic Violence was the third activity (Appendix D). The survey was designed to assess how involved pastors and clergy are with victims of battering and how willing victims are to share with them. Based on a prior research project of Dr. Nancy Nason-Clark, the researcher sought to verify if "there is a Holy Hush in the churches of Maury County Tennessee or if the silence is being shattered."[20] Karissa Horton provided research on Presbyterian clergy in a 2006 presentation to the Annual Conference of the American Public Health Association entitled, Attitudes Toward Domestic Violence Among a Sample of Presbyterian Clergy.[21] The findings of these two reports will be discussed as we look at the data collected by this researcher. This survey was used to collect data from religious leaders concerning their experience in supporting and referring victims of domestic violence. Emails were sent to forty-two clergy others were asked to complete the survey in a face-to-face encounter. Calls were placed to those that did not respond by email. A total of nineteen responses were tallied and evaluated from clergy in the Middle Tennessee area and peers from my Cohort Group who are Seminary students.

The demographics of those who completed the survey are shown in the table below (Table 3). The respondents are all African American with the exception of one person. That person is Caucasian and a member of the United Methodist Church. The average age of the combined group fifty-six years old with an average of eighteen years in ministry. The oldest clergy member answering the survey is seventy-eight years old

[20]Nancy Nason-Clark, *The Battered Wife* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997).

[21]Margaret L. Karissa Horton, M. A. Vaaler, Christopher G. Ellison, "Attitudes Toward Domestic Violence Among a Sample of Presbyterian Clergy," The University of Texas at Austin, American Public Health Association 2006 Annual Conference, accessed March 3, 2014, https://apha.confex.com/apha/134am /techprogram/paper_140296.htm.

and the youngest is forty. The years in ministry range from four to thirty-nine, with 47% having been in ministry eleven to twenty years. Pastors at this present time are 53%. Denominations represented in this sample are 53% Baptist, 32% African American Episcopal (AME), 11% Church of God in Christ (COGIC), and 5% United Methodist. 63% of the clergy answering this survey live in Tennessee and 58% are pastors.

When asked the question regarding their belief that one in five couples in their congregation had experienced violence in the home, 63% of the combined total answered yes. Of the pastors and clergy in Tennessee, 67% responded positively to the question. Dr. Nason-Clark found in their survey that clergy were more willing to believe that couples in society-experienced violence, but not in their congregations.[22] She states that there is a general assumption of pastors that their congregation does not have these kinds of behavior problems.[23]

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Survey Participants

CLERGY	MIDDLE TN	PEERS	TOTAL
Age			
Up to age 50	5%	16%	21%
Ages 51 – 59	42%	16%	58%
Ages 60 and up	16%	5%	21%
Pastor			
Yes	37%	16%	53%
No	26%	21%	47%
Denomination			
Baptist	32%	21%	53%
African Methodist Episcopal	26%	5%	32%
Church of God in Christ	5%	5%	11%
United Methodist	0%	5%	5%
Years in Ministry			
Up to 10 years	11%	11%	21%
11-20 years	32%	16%	47%
21-30 years	16%	11%	26%

[22]Nason-Clark, *The Battered Wife*, 59.

[23]Ibid.

31years and up	5%	0%	5%
Gender			
Female	47%	26%	74%
Male	16%	11%	26%

When asked how many clergy believe that one in five couples in their congregation experience violence in the home, 63% agreed that this was a true statement for their congregation. Pastor and ministers confirmed that they are aware of the problem with domestic violence in the church. However, 33% of the respondents in Tennessee report that have never preached a sermon on domestic violence nor have they ever directly condemned domestic violence from their pulpits. On the other hand, 71% of the Doctor of Ministry peers confirm their use of domestic violence and abuse sermons to condemn abuse. The answer to the question on Clergy awareness of transition houses and their staff in their local areas revealed that three out of four clergy in Tennessee have this knowledge.

Question #11 asked how many pastors and ministers had counseled a battered woman to confirm the validity of question #1. Of those who responded, 79% answered that they have counseled a battered woman. Nason-Clark reported that two-thirds of the pastors they surveyed in evangelical churches in Canada have counseled women who were in an abusive relationship.[24] Nason-Clark confirms that intimate partner abuse is just as prevalent in Canada as in America and that pastors must be prepared to respond to the need for support by the victim.

When polled on how equipped the clergy feel they are to respond to situations of domestic violence, the majority of those completing the survey confirmed their

[24]Ibid., 68.

preparedness, 10% did not answer the question. This researcher asked the pastoral care professors at United Theological Seminary of their practice to include instruction of ministering to the needs of those suffering from domestic violence abuse and received a 100% response that this topic is covered as part of their curriculum. Referral patterns of clergy to outside resources can be addressed here as the preparedness of the counselor affects whether or not the victim is referred to an outside resource. Nason-Clark, in *The Battered Wife* it states, "It is important to note here that most clergy do not refer with regularity to other, secular counselors the individuals or couples who approach them about marital problems.[25] In dealing with violence, though, 84% of those responding to the survey stated they are not hesitant to refer to outside resources though 75% of the clergy in Tennessee feel they are equipped to provide counsel to the victim.

Questions 12-13 of the survey inquire about woman-to-woman and church-to-transition house support. Of the clergy in Tennessee, 58% answered yes to the question of woman-to-woman involvement. Of those the peers who responded, 86% said that this kind of support could be found in their congregations. Nason-Clark calls this assistance, "under the umbrella of Christian love and service," the best evidence of church support of a victim of violence.[26] As was done by this researcher in her focus group meetings, women helping women offer empowerment to a battered woman that no other support can. It has been found that Christian women have a better understanding of outside resources while taking advantage of the power of prayer. Nason-Clark found that churchwomen and transition houses sometimes clash when it comes to religious beliefs

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[25]Ibid., 73.

[26]Ibid., 126.

and practices.[27] Though they both agree on the safety of the victim, Christian women may have a different view of the journey to healing and restoration for the abused woman. In Tennessee 83% of the churches represented provide financial or in-kind support to the local transition house.

The final question of the survey asked how many churches have flyers in their restrooms that advise an abused person where to turn for help. Of the clergy reposing of the clergy said their churches do not display any referral information for victims of domestic violence in their washrooms. It was obvious, though, that the availability of such information would be very important to a woman who might not feel safe sharing her victimization with the pastor and/or congregation. One pastor disclosed that while he does not have this information in the bathroom, he does have it printed in his church bulletin and offers videos and other educational opportunities to his congregation.

Observation

To bring this project into the 21st Century a telephone focus group was conducted to provide the richness of interaction to people to where time, geography, and ease of attendance http://www.systemsthinker.com/quotes/is a factor. Telephone conference calls are more favorable reported as the best way to maintain privacy and offer a greater chance for openness in communication. Consequently, the conference call focus group worked well for the purpose of allowing the leader to be in one state while the participants were located in four other states. The desire was that this method of conducting a focus group would allow more people to participate; it did not. It is believed

[27]Ibid., 127.

that the topic of discussion and the stereotype that is attached to the victim is what hindered the involvement of more people.

The face-to-face focus group allows the leader to observe body language. However, what might be called a drawback in loss of sight can also be seen as an opportunity to develop listening skills. This researcher observed the voice tones, changes in pitch and silence to distinguish the reaction of the participants to the questions and/or discussion. It was hard to not be able to see the expressions on their faces at some of the questions asked. It would have also been good to be able to give a hug when some of the more difficult topics were discussed. The next advantage to this form of research is it allows the participant to be in their home, and able to carry out duties that do no require their active attention. Material for discussion was emailed to the group members up to a week ahead of time. This allowed them to review and be ready to discuss at the conference. Text messages were sent the day of the meeting as a quick reminder, which proved to be a valuable tool for ensuring the attendance of the group.

The best reward for the researcher in attempting the telephone focus group was the participants desire to continue with the group beyond the six-week limit. More than one person commented over and over how much the group helped them overcome in several areas of conflict in her life. The researcher found many times that God spoke to her at the point of her need while he used her to minister to the needs of others. The prayer time was always filled with the Spirit and rarely did anyone leave the call without feeling refreshed.

Since all of the focus group members are strong prayer warriors, it was not surprising to find the report of fulfillment in this area. I was astonished to learn that some

felt abandoned or that God was disciplining them. What did come out, though, is that the personal experiences with non-intimate partners were spilling over into their perception. It has been noted by this researcher that domestic violence could have a tendency to put one in a state of religious crisis just by the nature of the silence associated with the embarrassment of being abused. Shattering the silence has been the focus of this project and the response of the participants in this group have confirmed. It has been observed that when the Church (represented by this researcher) shows an interest in the plight of those who live in or leave abusive relationships and offers support, the victim does break the silence. The victim-survivor responds positively to the offer to experience healing and restoration as they recover from the effects of domestic violence.

Below are some of the responses from the evaluations completed by the Focus Group participants. The question was asked:

What support can the church provide you that would help you deal with a situation of domestic violence?

- Acknowledging that the abuse actually exists and believing the recipient of this abuse. Not participating in this abuse would go a long way. The church could accomplish this by educating themselves about this issue.

- I did go to my church, my Senior Pastor and explained to him what was happening to me-domestic terrorism (not by an intimate partner). He didn't understand and had great difficulty believing this is actually happening in the USA. I was given no support from my church. The church needs to become aware of this domestic terrorism and set up a support group within the church to help people who are being tortured right in their own home by these domestic terrorists. There is so much information out there about this and yet many are in denial about this or they just absolutely choose not to get involved.

- I believe the church should speak/teach more on what domestic violence is and ways to deal with it. They should also help with accountability for those involved. When there is knowledge of domestic violence the church should address it with the individuals and not try to keep it quiet for the sake of the

church or the person's reputation. Counseling should be available, and if both are not willing, the injured spouse should still be accepted and supported if they choose to leave the situation.

- We cannot pray for domestic violence to change only, but the church must begin teaching what domestic violence is, and how it affects everyone involved. Domestic violence cannot remain the hidden secret this needs to be exposed from all levels within the church from the pastor to the laymen.

The personal contact with clergy in seeking responses to the survey of their awareness and involvement with victims of domestic violence was quite revealing. Just the time it took to contact each person proved valuable as some of them began to realize that they did not know enough about the topic to be of good support to a victim. It was wonderful to learn that pastors in Tennessee are aware of the problems that exist in the County with victims seeking help regarding domestic abuse; however, I was disappointed to see the evidence that the Holy Hush is still prevalent in the church. It continues to be the belief of this researcher that if the topic were addressed from the pulpit in sermons and as special days, more victims would turn to the church. Packets of education will be mailed to each clergy member who responded to the survey along with a flyer that can be placed in the restroom of each church providing information on how a victim can find help.

Future Research

Future research, I have discovered, can have many different faces when it comes to domestic violence. I would like to be able to test this same model on teens and young adults to see how they would respond to the spirituality and religious sentiments scale. It is of great importance that the topic of domestic violence is addressed in church youth and young adult groups. Another area of importance is a real look at the reports of elder abuse in intimate partner relations. More and more partners are being sought from groups

that are ten or more years younger than the elder. In these instances, it is not uncommon for the younger partner to become the aggressor, especially when the victim is female in either instance. If the older partner if the man, the man tends to use age as an excuse to be abusive and the female is often looking for a father she never had. When the older partner is female, she might find herself taking abuse to maintain the relationship. Unfortunately, young men are looking for older women who are financially secure to take care of them. Abuse then becomes a form of control of not just her physical body but her finances as well. Churches must become equipped to respond to the needs of victims of abuse on all levels, of both sexes, and of all ages.

Another area of research is in the area of clergy willingness to attend training and other educational opportunities on the subject of domestic violence. There is not much advertisement of ministry-focused training that is offered on a state of federal level in Tennessee. A question to be answered is how many churches have dollars in their budgets that provide for training of church leaders or support of victims? How many churches are willing to cross denomination boundaries to share the expense of obtaining training for their leadership is another question to be answered?

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

My Focus Group consisted of six ladies who lived in the following states: Tennessee, California, two in Pennsylvania, and two in Indiana. We met on a telephone conference call each week. One participant joined the group mid-way through the process. That group remained intact even after it was scheduled to end. A crucial component to the project's success was to have persons on the team that were familiar with the effects of domestic abuse from the very beginning.

This was a multiphase project with three separate activities. The first was a weekly Hour of Empowerment/Bible Study that was scheduled for six-weeks. The second was a Community Awareness Day and a telephone/in-person survey to test clergy awareness on the issues of domestic violence; therefore, seamless integration was crucial.

The measurement tools were pre-developed by experts in the field. The WEB survey was developed by Page Smith on federal a grant and is currently available for public domain. It consisted of a ten-item questionnaire that helps the researcher assess a woman's exposure to battering and provides some data on how she copes with the abuse. The ASPIRES is a thirty-four-item assessment designed by Dr. Ralph Piedmont to allow a person to express their feelings in three categories, prayer fulfillment, universality and

connectedness. The researcher focused on the responses that revealed prayer fulfillment and connectedness to God in the analysis.

Success of Project

In my own past therapy sessions, it was learned that education is half the battle. During six-plus sessions with sometimes up to six participants, education was the main focus. In addition to helping the participants learn what domestic abuse is, she also taught how God feels about violence against women based on the words of the scripture and how God feels about them as victims. The last fact that was conveyed to this focus group was how the church should respond to a victim of domestic violence as a representative of God.

God's presence was very tangible in the meetings as the ladies shared their past experiences with the church and society in dealing with the abuse. Acting as a representative of the church, I encouraged the ladies to shatter the Holy Hush, and they did. It was important to show the ladies the love, care, and the healing power of God in their situations and in their lives. The power of the Holy Spirit to bind up their wounds and release them from the bondage of fear and rejection was received. The Word of God did its job by accomplishing in each lady what it was sent to do (Is 55:11).

Each session was proven that the silence was broken and the church was being used as a catalyst for this release. The hypothesis was being proven week-by-week as each lady came to the conference call ready to discuss their issues and to learn ways to cope and how to be released from the burden of their past and for some, their present. It was the availability to listen, teach, and pray with the group that made them willing and able to share of their experiences and to turn to the church for support. Thus, the church

became a vehicle of healing for those who suffer in silence from domestic abuse and recovery that would lead to restoration.

Value of the Team Approach

The process of teambuilding in self-directed learning as it relates to action research can be very rewarding when the team works in a cohesive manner. Each team member was chosen with a specific duty in mind and this helped me to stay focused on the individual parts of the project as they were needed them to come together.

The collegial approach to problem solving resulted in growth and comradery as the researcher experienced koinonia from the church members who supported the projects. It was not just the members of the church that gave their assistance but persons in the local and surrounding communities responded positively to the progress of this journey.

The process takes significant planning and scheduling skills. Assembling the core project team early, as suggested in the student manual, was key. Throughout the completion of each individual activity, the core team worked with the researcher to develop program goals and objectives and provided the direction needed to develop the abstract and methodology. This core group helped to set some of the parameters under which the two activities were implemented. The result was a consistency that was important to the overall success of this project

My core team included: two D.Min. Graduates from United Theological Seminary, a researcher, and a Sergeant Major (ret.) from the U.S. Army, who is a Ph.D. and currently working in the field of domestic violence. Each team member was very

familiar with the challenges and the issues at hand. Also on my core team was a peer associate, a member of this cohort group.

Reflections of this Journey

The Hour of Empowerment was more than I hoped for in one respect and somewhat disappointing in another. I was quite surprised to see that too many girls and women are still locked in a prison of silence where domestic violence is concerned. I was not prepared for the small number of participants I had after canvasing seven (7) churches on one street. With that and other publicity, the majority of my focus group was comprised of women from around the nation rather than from the town with the highest number of cases of domestic violence in the entire state. It was also surprising to learn the lack of active participation of the community and community leaders when it came to attendance at the community education day. It was, however, rewarding to obtain their verbal responses to the survey.

To do this project over again, there would be several steps added to make this project more successful. First thing would be to spend more time soliciting the participation of the church members and the community. Second, personal visits would be made to other pastors to seek their participation in this event. Third, a committee or participants from the communities would be included in the planning process. The last step to improve this project model would be the use of a survey before the start of the project to assess the interest and/or exposure to domestic violence survey and to learn what people think when they hear the term, domestic violence.

To strengthen this model for future use, more time would be spent trying to engage the younger population of women and maybe teens to participate in my focus

group. In the report, *Dating Abuse Statistics*, from loveisrespect.org it was stated, "Girls and young women between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence—almost triple the national average." Also, more time would be allowed to promote the project within my home church, promoting the idea of forming a domestic violence support group. Finally, a strong evaluation tool for the overall project would be developed to show the effectiveness of the whole project and my core team members would be asked to complete this evaluation.

Graces received during this journey to become a doctor of the church are almost too many to count. In 2013, a move was made from my home state of Tennessee alone for the first time in my life with the Lord as my companion. In this new place, it became clear really quickly how strong my faith in God was and in his ability to keep me focused on the prize. Those who became professional associates were met in some of the most amazing ways. One was met at a garage sale soon after the moved to Dayton, Ohio. Another was met at a restaurant. The third associate was met through LinkedIn and the fourth while performing an online search for clergy responses to domestic violence. This scholar had implemented such a research project and her report was online. A call was placed to the number that was provided and the researcher spoke with me that day. Today she has her own research company and data analysis is her specialty.

There have been many sleep-interrupted nights, tricks, traps, and snares designed to make me fail. It was surprising to find that while encouraging the participants of the focus group to stand on God's promises those words became important for me.

The Future and This Model

To be able to replicate this ministry project in other settings, I have discussed with some colleagues the idea of possibly marketing this Model to some of the larger church National Conventions, i.e. National Baptist USA, National Baptist USA, Inc., Progressive Baptist, the American Baptist, the AME Connectional Church, United Methodist, the Churches of God, etc. I would approach the leadership about adding my Model to the curriculum as a class that is offered during one of their week-long sessions. Once published, the book along with an instructional CD and PowerPoint training tool can be packaged and sold to churches, non-profit organizations and other agencies where involving the church in supporting victim/survivors of domestic abuse is imperative.

Employment will be sought with National or State organizations whose main focus is providing support to victims of domestic violence. It is also possible to become a consultant to churches and other non-profit organizations who would like to develop a ministry to victims of domestic violence. In 1998-2003 there was a ministry organized in my name called, Hope for the Hurting. The ministry was chartered by the state. It is not unreasonable to think that at some point, it might be reopened as a working non-profit or not-for-profit organization.

Lessons Learned

What can make this a stronger model? It has been decided that the dependability of God can be used to invite some popular supporters of domestic violence to speak at an awareness day or other activity. Recently, a list of sixteen Celebrities was found online who support the cause to end domestic violence. One was Oprah Winfrey who grew up in Nashville and was in my graduating class at Tennessee State University (1987). Popular

Country Music star Tim McGraw, his wife Faith Hill are residents of Tennessee, and they support domestic violence shelters in the state. I saw a news article in September 2014 that showed Kerry Washington, the star of the weekly drama, Scandal, supporting the fight against the economic abuse associated with domestic violence. Ms. Washington is a spokesperson for The Purse Initiative sponsored by The All State Foundation. I do not like "crown getters," however, in this case, it is an important enough effort that it would be worth seeking some known celebrities or writers to support this cause.

Conclusion

When the church shows an interest in providing support to a woman who has been victimized by domestic abuse this sends two statements to the community. One, there is no sacred cow in the sanctuary concerning domestic violence. The second statement that becomes a reality in the life of the victim is that it's OK to break the silence that has been a part of Christian and societal heritage for centuries. All of the participants in this field experience were over the age of fifty. This age is the rising leader in statistics on women who are being abused in intimate partner relationships.

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My core team included: two Doctor of Ministry graduates from United Theological Seminary, a researcher, and a Sergeant Major (ret.) from the U.S. Army, who is a Ph.D. and currently working in the field of domestic violence. Each team member was very familiar with the challenges and the issues at hand. Also on my core team was a peer associate, a member of this cohort group.

Reflections of this Journey

The Hour of Empowerment was more than I hoped for in one respect and somewhat disappointing in another. I was quite surprised to see that too many girls and women are still locked in a prison of silence where domestic violence is concerned. I was not prepared for the small number of participants I had after canvasing seven (7) churches on one street. With that and other publicity, the majority of my focus group was comprised of women from around the nation rather than from the town with the highest number of cases of domestic violence in the entire state. It was also surprising to learn the lack of active participation of the community and community leaders when it came to attendance at the community education day. It was, however, rewarding to obtain their verbal responses to the survey.

To do this project over again, there would be several steps added to make this project more successful. First thing would be to spend more time soliciting the participation of the church members and the community. Second, personal visits would be made to other pastors to seek their participation in this event. Third, a committee or participants from the communities would be included in the planning process. The last step to improve this project model would be the use of a survey before the start of the project to assess the interest and/or exposure to domestic violence survey and to learn what people think when they hear the term, domestic violence.

To strengthen this model for future use, more time would be spent trying to engage the younger population of women and maybe teens to participate in my focus group. In the report, *Dating Abuse Statistics*, from loveisrespect.org it was stated, "Girls and young women between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four experience the highest

rate of intimate partner violence—almost triple the national average." Also, more time would be allowed to promote the project within my home church, promoting the idea of forming a domestic violence support group. Finally, a strong evaluation tool for the overall project would be developed to show the effectiveness of the whole project and my core team members would be asked to complete this evaluation.

Graces received during this journey to become a doctor of the church are almost too many to count. In 2013, a move was made from my home state of Tennessee alone for the first time in my life with the Lord as my companion. In this new place, it became clear really quickly how strong my faith in God was and in his ability to keep me focused on the prize. Those who became professional associates were met in some of the most amazing ways. One was met at a garage sale soon after the moved to Dayton, Ohio. Another was met at a restaurant. The third associate was met through LinkedIn and the fourth while performing an online search for clergy responses to domestic violence. This scholar had implemented such a research project and her report was online. A call was placed to the number that was provided and the researcher spoke with me that day. Today she has her own research company and data analysis is her specialty.

There have been many sleep-interrupted nights, tricks, traps, and snares designed to make me fail. It was surprising to find that while encouraging the participants of the focus group to stand on God's promises those words became important for me.

The Future and This Model

To be able to replicate this ministry project in other settings, I have discussed with some colleagues the idea of possibly marketing this Model to some of the larger church National Conventions, i.e. National Baptist USA, National Baptist USA, Inc., Progressive Baptist, the American Baptist, the AME Connectional Church, United Methodist, the Churches of God, etc. I would approach the leadership about adding my Model to the curriculum as a class that is offered during one of their week-long sessions. Once published, the book along with an instructional CD and PowerPoint training tool can be packaged and sold to churches, non-profit organizations and other agencies where involving the church in supporting victim/survivors of domestic abuse is imperative.

Employment will be sought with National or State organizations whose main focus is providing support to victims of domestic violence. It is also possible to become a consultant to churches and other non-profit organizations who would like to develop a ministry to victims of domestic violence. In 1998-2003 there was a ministry organized in my name called, Hope for the Hurting. The ministry was chartered by the state. It is not unreasonable to think that at some point, it might be reopened as a working non-profit or not-for-profit organization.

Lessons Learned

What can make this a stronger model? It has been decided that the dependability of God can be used to invite some popular supporters of domestic violence to speak at an awareness day or other activity. Recently, a list of sixteen Celebrities was found online who support the cause to end domestic violence. One was Oprah Winfrey who grew up in Nashville and was in my graduating class at Tennessee State University (1987). Popular

Country Music star Tim McGraw and his wife Faith Hill are residents of Tennessee, and they support domestic violence shelters in the state. I saw a news article in September 2014 that showed Kerry Washington, the star of the weekly drama, Scandal, supporting the fight against the economic abuse associated with domestic violence. Ms. Washington is a spokesperson for The Purse Initiative sponsored by The All State Foundation. I do not like "crown getters," however, in this case, it is an important enough effort that it would be worth seeking some known celebrities or writers to support this cause.

Conclusion

When the church shows an interest in providing support to a woman who has been victimized by domestic abuse this sends two statements to the community. One, there is no sacred cow in the sanctuary concerning domestic violence. The second statement that becomes a reality in the life of the victim is that it's OK to break the silence that has been a part of Christian and societal heritage for centuries. All of the participants in this field experience were over the age of fifty. This age is the rising leader in statistics on women who are being abused in intimate partner relationships.

APPENDIX A

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE WITH BATTERING SCALE

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE WITH BATTERING (WEB) SCALE

Developed by Paige Hall Smith, University of North Carolina at Greensboro[1]

Date:_____

"Everything you share with me is confidential. This means what you share with me is not reportable to child welfare, INS (Homeland Security) or law enforcement. There are just two things that I would have to report- if you are suicidal, or your children are being harmed. The rest stays between us and helps me better understand how I can help you." For every question below, please look at the scale and select the number (1-6) that best reflects how you feel.

Here are ten statements that other women have used to describe their lives with their partners. Please read each statement and circle the answer that best describes how much you agree or disagree with each. Answer the questions thinking about your current (or your most recent) partner.

[1]Paige Hall Smith, Women's Experience with Battering (WEB) Scale, Used with permission.

Item	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Agree a little	Disagree a little	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
1. He makes me feel unsafe even in my own home.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I feel ashamed of the things he does to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I try not to rock the boat because I am afraid of what he might do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I feel like I am programmed to react a certain way to him.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I feel like he keeps me prisoner.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. He makes me feel like I have no control over my life, no power, no protection.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I hide the truth from others because I am afraid not to.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I feel owned and controlled by him.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. He can scare me without laying a hand on me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. He has a look that goes straight through me and terrifies me.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Notes:

1. Battering is defined as women's continuous perceptions of susceptibility to physical and psychological danger, loss of power and control in a relationship with a male partner.

2. The WEB Scale can be made gender-neutral by changing "he" to "my partner." It has not been validated with male victims of female violence or same-sex battering.

3. The numbers can be reversed when administered so that Strongly agree = 6 and Strongly disagree = 1.

APPENDIX B

DIFFERENT TYPES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Different Types of Domestic Violence[1]

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any use of physical force to control or hurt a domestic partner. It can range from physically restraining someone or not allowing them to leave the house to beating them or even murder. Physical abuse doesn't have to cause physical injury to be domestic violence. Throwing or pushing a partner relies on physical violence to control and intimidate just like battering or choking a partner does.

Emotional or Verbal Abuse

It's possible to be abusive without being physically threatening. Verbal abuse is not physically violent and, in some cases, isn't even illegal, but it is abuse nonetheless. Threatening a partner, yelling and screaming, calling him names or intentionally saying hurtful things, embarrassing him in front of friends and family and putting him down or minimizing his accomplishments are all verbal types of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse can take other forms of destructive and controlling behavior. Emotionally abusive people may destroy their partners' possessions or threaten to. They may get jealous of other social relationships and try to keep their partners from going out or check up on them continuously. They may strand their partners somewhere after a fight to teach them a lesson.

Economic Abuse

Economic abuse is an attempt to punish or control a partner through control of economic resources. An economic abuser may not allow her partner access to money or credit cards or may steal or control her partner's money. She may try to keep her partner more dependent on her by not allowing him to work or may withhold basic resources, such as food and clothing or even medicine and shelter as a way to dominate her partner.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is frequently linked to physical abuse. It includes outright violent acts such as sexual assault, but does not have to. Sexual harassment--humiliating a partner based on her lifestyle or sexuality--is a form of sexual abuse that is often not physically violent. Sexual exploitation--coercing a partner into looking at or making pornography or engaging in unwanted sex acts--is also abuse.

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[1]Isaiah David, "What Are the Different Types of Domestic Violence?," accessed March 14, 2014, http://www.ehow.com/list_ 6705286_different-types-domestic-violence_.html.

Stalking

Stalking is a type of abuse that overlaps with emotional abuse. According to the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress, "stalking is harassment of or threatening another person, especially in a way that haunts the person physically or emotionally in a repetitive and devious manner." Stalking can include physically following someone around or tracking him with a global positioning system tracker, making repeated phone calls, installing hidden cameras, spying on computer use or sending frequent, unwanted gifts or letters. Stalking can include making threats to hurt a partner or her friends and family, or destroying or vandalizing her property. Stalkers may turn violent, either to the victim or to friends and family members the stalker perceives as making her inaccessible.

APPENDIX C

ABBREVIATED HISTORY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ABBREVIATED HISTORY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST

1871 Alabama is the first state to rescind the legal right of men to beat their wives.

1875 A shelter for abused women opens in Belton, Texas.

1972 The nation's first emergency rape crisis line opens in Washington, D.C.

1975 Pennsylvania establishes the first state coalition against sexual assault, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape.

1976 Pennsylvania establishes the first state coalition against domestic violence, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and becomes the first state to pass legislation providing for orders of protection for battered women.

The first battered women's shelter for women of color was opened in San Francisco, California.

1977 Emerge, the first counseling program for men who batter is found in Boston, Massachusetts.

1978 The National Coalition Against Sexual Assault is formed to combat sexual violence and promote services for rape victims.

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence is organized as the voice for the battered women's movement on the national level.

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights holds a forum and produces a 700 page compilation of written and oral testimony entitled *Battered Women: Issues of Public Policy*. This forum held in Washington, D.C. was entitled *Consultation on Battered Women.*

1980 First domestic violence shelter on an Indian reservation in the U.S. was opened by the White Buffalo Calf Women Society.

1981 The first annual Domestic Violence Awareness Week is celebrated.

1985 U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop identifies domestic violence as a public health issue that cannot be the police needs help to deal with.

1988 Congress amends the Victims of Crime Act, adding the requirement that states makes awards to victims of domestic violence through a compensation program.

1990 U.S. Senator Joe Biden introduces the first Violence Against Women Act.

1993 U.S. Senator Joseph Biden sponsors legislation called the Violence Against Women Act, as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. The legislation passes both the House and the Senate.

1994 September 13, Violence Against Women Act is signed into law as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994.

1995 The Violence Against Women Grants Office was created in January 1995 at the Department of Justice to oversee and implement grant programs and funding for victims' services. The grants also allow organizations to seek civil rights remedies for gender-related crimes, and provide training to increase police and court officials' sensitivity.

1996 The National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) takes its first call on February 21, funded by the Violence against Women Act.

2000 President Bill Clinton signs the Violence Against Women Act of 2000 into law.

2002 The name of the VAWO changes to the Office of Violence Against Women and legislation passes making OVW a permanent part of the DOJ.

2006 President George W. Bush signs the Violence Against Women Act of 2005 into law.

2009 President Barack Obama is the first President to declare April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month[1]

[1]"Justice Department Commemorates Fifteen Years of the Violence Against Women Act," *Department of Justice,* September 14, 2009, accessed May 14, 2013, http://www.justice. gov/ printf/ PrintOut3.jsp.

APPENDIX D

SURVERY OF CLERGY ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

SURVERY OF CLERGY ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

IS THERE A HOLY HUSH IN THE CHURCH OR IS THE SILENCE BEING SHATTERED?

Please answer the questions below. Feel free to use them as a tool to learn how to better serve victims of violence.

	YES	NO
Do you believe that one in five couples in your congregation experience violence in the home;		
Have you counseled five or more abused women in the last year;		
Have you counseled at least one abused woman;		
Do you feel well equipped to respond to victims of domestic violence;		
Have you preached a message on abuse;		
Do you discuss the possibility of violence in premarital counseling.		
Have you ever visited the transition house in or near your local area;		
Do you know by name any of the workers in the local shelter;		
Have you ever preached a message that explicitly condemns wife abuse and/or child abuse;		
Are you reluctant to refer to outside community resources those that come to you for help;		
Have you ever counseled a woman who has been battered;		
Have the women in your congregation helped a battered woman they knew;		
Does your Church and/or Women's group supported the local transition house by financial or in-kind donations;		
Is there a flyer or other instruction in the church washrooms or other safe places that outline what to do if you are an abused woman.		

Age:

Pastor? Yes or No

Denomination:
Number of years in ministry?

*Adapted from the book and used with permission from Dr. Nancy Nason-Clark, author, *The Battered Wife: How Christians Confront Family Violence* (1997).

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